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Manners, George
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# EDGAR;

OR,

# CALEDONIAN FEUDS.

A TRAGEDY.

NOW PERFORMING WITH UNIVERSAL APPLAUSE,

At the Theatre Royal, Covent Garden.

First edition

*By GEORGE MANNERS, Esq.*

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1806.

## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

| | |
|---|---|
| EDGAR | *Miss Smith* |
| OSBERT | *Mr. H. Johnstone* |
| BARON | *Mr. Pope* |
| MALCOLM | *Mr. Chapman* |
| MORTON | *Mr. Cresswell* |
| COUNT ZULMIO | *Mr. Claremont* |
| OFFICER | *Mr. Klanert* |
| COUNTESS | *Mrs. Humphries* |
| MATILDA | *Mrs. H. Johnstone* |
| EMMA | *Miss Brunton* |

SCENE------*The Highlands of Scotland.*

*** The lines marked with inverted commas are omitted in the representation.

# PREFACE.

During the first part of my residence in Wales, whither I retired at the early age of eighteen, Mrs. Radcliffe's entertaining novel, *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne*, came into my hands. The ingenuity of the plot, and variety of interesting situations, immediately suggested the idea, that an excellent drama might be erected on such a basis. Having mentioned my opinion to some friends, they not only coincided in it, but entreated me to become the architect. I started at the proposal---A stranger to the stage and all its *trickery*, unpractised in poetry, and unskilled in literary composition, innumerable difficulties presented themselves to my imagination. However, I was at length persuaded to brave them all; and the *first two* lines of blank verse I ever wrote, were the two first in the tragedy of Edgar. In the progress of my labors I found it necessary to deviate considerably from the novel; to omit some characters, and create others; among the latter of which that of the Baron is the most conspicuous. Alleyn (whom I have called Edgar) bore so strong a resemblance to Mr. Home's Douglas, that I was obliged to have the latter continually before me as a beacon, to avoid splitting on the rock of *plagiarism*. The *denouement* is also very different from the original. At length I experienced that *delectable satisfaction*, known only to authors, of writing the word *Finis*. Although it is not impossible but some

*good-natured* reviewer may say the *reading of it* gave him similar *pleasure*. Having completed my work (and two months before I should have as soon thought it possible for me to rebuild the city of Jerusalem) I packed it very *carefully*, and forwarded it to Mr. Kemble, then manager of Drury Lane Theatre: but the season was near closing, and it was returned; since which period it reposed very quietly among some old magazines till the beginning of last April, when a friend requested I would offer it to the charming young actress under whose auspices it was first produced. The very great applause it has since received in public representation (notwithstanding the disadvantages of being brought forward so late, and at a benefit) has, I confess, kindled a spark of vanity in my bosom. By the *uninfluenced* approbation of the public prints I feel much gratified: they have warmly supported the tragedy of Edgar, with the exception of two obscure Sunday critics, whose only claim to originality consists in ridiculously opposing the opinions of every cotemporary writer. Had they confined their observations to the critique on my play, however illiberal I might have thought them, they would have been treated with silent contempt; but shameless *falsehood* and premeditated malice should ever be exposed, for

> " *Talibus insidiis perjurique arte Sinonis*
> " *Credita res*"——

One of these literary assassins most impudently affirms, that the critique, in favor of my tragedy, which appeared in the Morning Post, was paid for as an advertisement, and that *all* the other papers were *bribed to puff*; for, says he, if this were not the case, the piece would have been played twelve successive nights. Poor fellow! thou must be a little muddy in the brain, or thou would'st have perceived by the play-bills that it was advertised for the very next night

that was not either a private or public benefit; and the disturbance which took place at the theatre on Wednesday evening, when Miss Smith's indisposition obliged the managers to substitute the comedy of John Bull, sufficiently indicates the public opinion of its merits. Edgar was universally called for, by one of the most crowded audiences of the season, and Miss Smith's part desired to be read; nor was it until after several unsuccessful attempts that Mr. Emery could obtain a hearing, when he assured the audience, upon his honor, that many of the other performers were absent, in consequence of the play having been declared to be changed.—After three quarters of an hour's discontent, they consented to receive the above popular comedy: nor could this be attributed to my private friends—I had few or none in the house on that night, and not *one-tenth* the number which authors usually send in on the preceding. Besides, *good Mr. Critic*, it would ill suit a poor poet's pocket to pay for the numerous paragraphs which have appeared in commendation of Edgar. Did'st thou feel rather sore at not sharing a little of that scarce commodity, a poet's gold, which thou assert'st to have been so liberally distributed to others? Poor wretch! I pity thee! Really, thou has egregiously exposed thyself; for I declare (mind, I don't mean to prostitute my honor to such a thing as thou art) but to the public I declare, upon *my honor*, *that I never paid a single shilling for any newspaper paragraph.*

Am I not a bold fellow thus to hurl defiance in thy teeth, who possessest the power of *Weekly Dispatching** me?---Adieu! God mend thee!------The other critic is a gentleman of *profound penetration*--he discover'd the whole of my plot in the two first scenes; that it was taken from the Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne,

* This *mendaccous* newspaper is called The *Weekly Dispatch.*

which, by the bye, had been publicly acknowledged three weeks before; and that I was indebted to Mr. Bell's British Theatre for every epithet and every line—This is a bold assertion; but I will make a bolder, namely—That *there is not a line stolen from any play that has appeared in print!*—The public will decide between us—Another wonderful discovery of this penetrating man is, that Mr. H. Johnstone's attitudes in the character of Osbert were those of *a Lady*—Really, this is too ridiculous—Nothing could be more manly or more dignified than the action of this accomplished performer.

I have now only to notice his illiberal and unmanly attack upon a young lady, not more admired for the splendor of her professional talents than for the amiable qualities which distinguish her in private life—she is arraigned, not for having played the part of Edgar ill (that was impossible) but for having played it at all—I shall simply relate the circumstances which induced Miss Smith to assume it.—She had publicly pledged herself to bring forward a new play—the parts were cast, and the principal one accepted by Mr. C. Kemble; his lamented illness, however, obliged him to relinquish what he had undertaken.—In this dilemma, Miss Smith had no alternative: she could not expect any performer would study so long a part in little more than a week, and therefore, at *my request*, determined to play it herself, rather than abandon her intention of bringing out the play.—When Mr. Harris's accustomed liberality induced him to give out Edgar for a second representation, she wrote again to Mr. C. Kemble, and begged him to take the part from her, modestly saying she thought it a duty which she owed the author: but his health would not permit him to comply with her request.

The applause her performance of the character has since obtained, and the liberal praise bestowed by all the daily papers, will leave Miss Smith little cause to re-

gret the contemptible observations of this malevolent critic.

*I know the Man!* and know the cause of his rancour to be a complication of envy, jealousy, and *disappointment* ---he will have another opportunity of levelling at me the arrows of his malice, thro' the medium of a monthly publication which he frequently disgraces; but they will inflict no wounds in my peace, and, I hope, very few in my literary reputation.

Doubtless, the gentlemen who conduct the other monthly reviews will discover many faults in this tragedy; they will notice them with severity, but not with illiberality; and I shall endeavour to profit by their remarks.

In no instance have I willfully trespassed upon any person's literary domain, except Mrs. Radcliffe's: if it be a crime to borrow part of a plot from a novelist, it is one of which the greatest dead and living dramatic authors have been guilty—a Shakespeare and a Colman did the same.

With respect to my *poetry*, it is necessary to observe, I have not, as is customary with most writers, where a speech ends with a short line, completed the measure in that which begins the next: with such trammels, in my opinion, a dramatic poet should never be encumbered.

To Miss Smith, Mr. Pope, Mr. and Mrs. H. Johnstone, Mr. Chapman, and indeed every performer who acted in this play, I return my sincerest thanks, for their exertions in my favour; and to me it is a great source of gratification that a liberal public bestowed that applause which their merits so eminently deserved.

As the principal part of this Preface is written while the printers' man waits to take it to the press, it must be regarded rather as a hasty statement of facts, than as an attempt at elegant composition.

*June 7th*, 1806.

# EDGAR;

OR,

# CALEDONIAN FEUDS.

## *ACT I.*

### SCENE I.

*A Mountainous Scene at Sun-set, with a distant View of the Turrets of Glendore Castle—Edgar is seen passing over the Mountains, habited as a Highland Peasant, with a Hunter's Spear and Horn.*

*Enter* OSBERT.

OSBERT.

STOP, stranger!

EDGAR.

Who calls?

OSBERT.

One who, forlorn amidst these pathless wilds,
Requests your friendly guidance to his dwelling,
And he'll reward you to your utmost wish.

EDGAR.

Name not reward—I shall rejoice to serve you.
He who displays the honor'd arms of Morven
Has here much cause of dread.

OSBERT.

Thanks, gen'rous stranger.—But I prithee say,
Why shou'd the arms of Morven's ancient house
A source of danger prove?

EDGAR.

See'st thou yon gothic tow'r, whose antique spire
Reflects the radiance of the setting sun?—
The tyrant Malcolm dwells within those walls.
Had'st thou proceeded to his fatal gates,
Such vengeful hatred does he bear thy lord,
Death or imprisonment had been thy lot.

OSBERT.

Lord Malcolm!—Gracious Heaven!

EDGAR.

Fear not; I will conduct thee safe—but say,
Does the young Earl, whose arms thou bear'st, possess
His father's courage and his martial soul?

OSBERT.

I hope he does.

EDGAR.

Then must his youthful breast with ardour burn
To wreak dire vengeance on yon savage wretch,
And strike his father's murderer to the heart!

OSBERT—*(with agitation.)*

O God!—My father!

EDGAR.

Thy father!—*(kneels.)*
Forgive, my noble lord, forgive the warmth,
With which, unknowing whom you were, I spoke!
If aught, in haste, displeasing I have said,
Believe me 'twas the love I bear your house
Made me thus openly declare my mind,

OSBERT,

OSBERT.

Rise, gallant youth!
Your ardent sentiments have fir'd my breast;
Which pants, and long has panted, to revenge
My father's death.—My clan to-morrow meet
To celebrate my birth; I'll sound their minds,
And if I find them eager for the fight,
(Of which indeed I doubt not) 'ere next moon,
We'll raze yon massy bulwarks to the ground,
And drag the gory lion from his den!

EDGAR.

Joyful each vassal will obey your call.
As for myself, tho' little us'd to arms,
'Tis my ambition to be led by you.

OSBERT.

Accept my warmest thanks;—to-morrow's dawn
We'll talk of this again—Thou'lt be my guest
This night at Morven Castle.—On, on, my friend,
Night comes apace, and danger waits us here.

EDGAR.

That way, my lord—*(bows)* I'll follow you. [*Exeunt.*

## SCENE II.

*An Apartment in Morven Castle.---The* COUNTESS *enters.*

COUNTESS.

In awful darkness all around is wrapt:
Swift flits the bat across the misty moor;
The waking screech-owl, harbinger of death,
Shrieks from the moss-crown'd turrets, and augments

The dread forebodings of a mother's breast.
O, Osbert, Osbert! wherefore this delay?
So long I mourn'd thy murder'd father's loss,
Methought no space within this care-worn heart
Was left unoccupied for other griefs:
But now thy youthful fire breeds new alarms;
A mother's fondness wakes a mother's fears.
Whene'er thou'rt absent from my widow'd eyes,
My boding bosom fears thy daring mind
Will plan some desp'rate enterprize against
The bloody chieftain who thy father slew;
At which (altho' I know the cause be just)
My blood congeals, and all my heart seems frozen.
*(a horn sounds.)*
Hark! from the barbacan the warder's horn
Proclaims his safe return—those are his steps—
O God of Heav'n! I thank thee!
[*Enter* OSBERT *and* EDGAR.
Welcome, my Osbert, to thy mother's arms!
What has thus long detain'd thee—sure no harm
Has kept thee hence?

OSBERT.

Dear madam, cease thy fears.

COUNTESS.

But why thus late returned?

OSBERT.

The softness of the ev'ning breeze
Invited me to leave the castle walls.
Heedless I stray'd o'er many a lofty hill,
My mind absorb'd in pleasing contemplation,
'Till a thick mist, collected in the south,
Came hurrying on, and ere I knew my danger
Envelop'd all in darkness.—Quick I turn'd,
And strove, but vainly, to retrace my steps;
Nor tree nor shrub nor well-known cot appear'd,

To

To guide me on my way.—"At length the sun
"Put forth again his horizontal beams
"And all was clear. Before me now stretch'd wide
"A barren heath—behind, a dusky ridge
"Of trackless mountains seem'd to meet the skies.
All hopes of home had vanish'd, when I met,
Returning from the chase, this gen'rous youth,
Who hath conducted me in safety hither.

COUNTESS—(*to Edgar.*)

Stranger, I thank thee with a mother's heart!
Say what reward shall recompense thy care?

EDGAR.

To serve Lord Morven is to me an honor
Above all recompense.

OSBERT.

Such nobleness of mind bespeaks thy birth
Above the common stamp.

EDGAR.

My lord, my birth has little else to boast,
Save that my father bears an honest name,
And tills with industry the land he holds,
By easy vassalage, on your domain.

OSBERT.

Henceforth enfranchis'd are thy father's lands!
His flocks shall now untributary stray,
And brouze their thymy food.—Thy Name?

EDGAR.

Edgar.

OSBERT.

Let Morven Castle be thy future home.

COUNTESS.

Nature cou'd ne'er intend such modest worth
To bloom obscurely, and neglected fade!

(*To*

(*To Osbert.*) My son, if you regard a mother's peace,
Leave not the castle unattended.—Virtue,
Alas! is not without her foes.—There are,
Who with an envious eye regard your honors,
And fain wou'd crush the rising hopes of Morven.
[*Exit.*

OSBERT.

Edgar, believe not youthful haste,
Or inexperience, prompts me to select
Almost a stranger for my bosom friend:
No, 'tis thy open, thy ingenuous mind,
Which, through the darkning mist of obscure birth,
Appears more lovely; as the shadowy clouds,
That oft envelop the ascending moon,
Encrease her beauty, tho' they dim her rays.

EDGAR.

Let future actions speak
How I deserve your friendship and esteem.
But since, my lord, you graciously are pleas'd,
That I remain with you at Morven Castle,
By your permission, I will now retire
To bear the happy tidings to my father.

OSBERT.

Be it so.

EDGAR.

My lord, farewell!

OSBERT.

Awhile farewell. [*Exit* EDGAR.
Contending passions long have striv'n in vain
To reign triumphant in my warring breast:
A slaughter'd father's shade call'd for revenge;
A tender mother's tears withheld my arm,
What duty wou'd—maternal love forbade
The equal balance trembled in my mind;

But

But now that peasant's noble sentiments
And animated words have turn'd the scale:
Honor, revenge, and duty call—to arms! [*Exit.*

## SCENE III.

*An Apartment in the Castle of Glendore.*—MALCOLM *and* MORTON.

MALCOLM.

Say no more!
I tell thee it must be so!—The son remov'd
Revenge will be complete.—Consider too, [*breast.*)
Another passion here, demands his death—(*striking his*
No chieftain will remain to head his clan
And guard the Countess and the lovely maid,
Whose charms have touch'd my heart.

MORTON.

Are there no other means?

MALCOLM.

None so sure!

MORTON.

I fear the danger———

MALCOLM.

Coward!—remember when I spar'd your life
And rais'd you to the station you now hold,
You promis'd to perform whate'er I will'd.
If you refuse me now———

MORTON.

I meant not to refuse obedience to Lord Malcolm's will,
But thought some other means might be devis'd,

More

More safe than Osbert's death, lest his allies
Shou'd join their forces to avenge his fall.

MALCOLM.

What other means?
Thinkst thou that haughty and imperious boy
Wou'd ever deign to listen to my terms?
I know him better—'tis his death alone
Can gratify, at once, vengeance and love.

MORTON.

Then I advise, to seek among your clan
Two men of desp'rate and undaunted hearts:
Let these in ambush wait near Morven woods,
Where oft, at close of day, young Osbert strays:
He in your pow'r the double point is gain'd.

MALCOLM.

I like your counsel well!
What meant those childish fears—We've stray'd too far
In vice's labyrinth to retrace our steps,
And gain the path of virtue—then let's on.
The hound, once train'd to hunt the tusky boar,
Will ne'er find pleasure in more harmless game!
I yesterday dispatch'd a trusty spy,
To learn what passes at to-morrow's feast,
When all his tenantry and soldiers meet:
Let his report determine our resolves.
Now, Morton, go—attend your prisoner.

MORTON.

I will, my Lord.— [*Exit.*

MALCOLM.

What means this tremor that unstrings my nerves?
I fear no mortal foe!—yet, when alone,
I seem the veriest coward upon earth.
O conscience, fell destroyer of my peace!
Thou greedy maw-worm of the guilty heart,

Haunt

Haunt not my bosom, like an injur'd shade,
Creating terror where no danger's nigh!
Leave the perturbed mansion of my breast!
Go,—dwell with virtue——there thou prov'st a balm
To ease the pangs of undeserved woe——
But to the murd'rer's polluted mind
How keen thy shaft, how venemous thy wound!
Will Osbert's death, procur'd by stratagem,
Retrieve my honor or erase the stain
Of begging mercy from his conquering sire?—
What if it will not!—Shall I therefore spare
The hated offspring of my deadliest foe,
Whose cursed valor baffled all my plans
And mock'd my power—"till he felt my sword
When least suspecting"—No!—I am resolv'd—
The heir of Morven dies—— [*Exit.*

## SCENE IV.

*The great Hall in Morven Castle——The Clan of the Earl discovered banquetting.*

*Enter* OSBERT *and* EDGAR, (*at whose approach, all rise and drink*)—"*To the noble Earl of Morven!*" (*Osbert bows, each Soldier then seizing his goblet in his left Hand and striking his Sword with his right drinks*)—"*Peace to the Ashes of our murder'd Lord. Revenge and Honor to his Son!*"

OSBERT (*coming forward.*)

Ye brave companions of my father's toils,
With whom your valor often times has gain'd
Unfading laurels and immortal fame,
I here address you with more confidence,

Because the son of him you've serv'd and lov'd!
Joyful I hear your noble sentiments,
Which prove your hearts in unison with mine.
The mem'ry of your brave lamented chief,
Whose kindness and impartial justice
Ever were employ'd to make you happy,
Cannot be blotted from your grateful minds.
His virtues were so eminently bright,
E'en envying guilt admir'd his matchless worth;
His charities so liberally bestow'd,
I dare assert there's not a single man,
Among you all, who has not shar'd his bounty:
Such was the chieftain—you've for ever lost—
Such was the father I must ever mourn!
Offended justice now demands our arms
T' avenge his death, and lay his angry ghost.

SOLDIERS (*drawing their swords and crossing them.*)
Thus we swear revenge!

OSBERT.
Let our resolves be secret, lest report
Of our intentions reach the Baron's ear,
Who, warn'd of danger, will secure his walls
With double garrison, and stricter watch.
To-morrow, when the sun has ceas'd to shine,
Let ev'ry gallant soldier, clad in arms,
Meet near the western confines of the wood,
That skirts Dungarron's plains; there you shall find
Your chieftain, eager to conduct you thence
In silence to surprize our sleeping foe.
Now to the hall and join the festive dance,
And close the night in revelry and joy.

SOLDIERS, (*Sheathing their swords.*)
Vengeance or Death—— [*Exeunt.*

OSBERT.
Markd'st thou the fire which light up every eye,
When crossing swords, each hero yow'd revenge?
By Heav'n it charm'd me!

EDGAR.

EDGAR.

Mark it, my lord!—It kindled such a flame,
And caus'd such strange emotions in my breast,
That had my heart been chill'd with coward blood,
The glowing heat had thaw'd the ice of fear,
And warm'd my soul to valor.

OSBERT.

With joy I view'd
The crimson rising on your manly cheek,
Which spoke the sentiments you felt within.

EDGAR.

Anxious I wait the hour,
When my ambition will be gratified;
For I have heard my aged father talk
Of war and battles, till my bosom throbb'd
To try the toughness of my youthful arm.

OSBERT.

Thou saidst thy father led a peasant's life.

EDGAR.

He does, my lord,
But spent his youthful vigor in a camp.
When yon fell tyrant's noble brother liv'd,
Lord of Glendore, beneath his banner oft
My father fought and bled.

(*Shouts.*)

OSBERT.

Whence are those shouts?

EDGAR.

'Tis but the soldiers' mirth.

OSBERT.

How happy those brave fellows are!
Unknowing but to-morrow's night may see

Widow'd

Widow'd their wives and fatherless their sons.
O Edgar, Edgar!

EDGAR.

What means my Lord!—You cannot doubt success,
With men so fam'd in arms.

OSBERT.

I doubt not but success will crown
To-morrow's enterprize—yet there's a foe
I cannot conquer, though I will not yield—
'Twas pity heav'd the sigh. What tears will flow
From my lov'd sister's supplicating eye!
What pangs will rend my widow'd mother's breast!
Tell me, my friend,
For thou'st a tender though a valiant heart,
How shall I decorate the tale that speaks
An *only* son's, an *only* brother's danger?

EDGAR.

I grieve that they must weep;
But when you plead the strong necessity
Which draws your sword, and urges you to arms,
They'll surely yield and own the cause is just,
Although they weep the danger.

OSBERT.

I dread this trial more than Malcolm's sword;
But since I am resolved that nought shall change
The sacred purpose of m' approving soul,
Ye heav'nly pow'rs, instruct my trembling tongue
How to unfold it to a parent's ear
In words that least may wound.

[*Exeunt.*

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.

## *ACT II.*

### SCENE I.

*An apartment in Morven Castle. Enter the Countess and Attendants.*

COUNTESS.

You said my son
Wish'd my attendance here.

ATTENDANT.

Madam, he bade me say so.

COUNTESS—*(Aside.)*

What can this mean ?

ATTENDANT.

Behold he comes.

COUNTESS.

You may retire.

*(Attendants withdraw.)*

*Enter* OSBERT.

OSBERT.

How fares my dearest mother ? Sure that smile
Bespeaks her happier than I long have seen her.

COUNTESS.

Why truly, Osbert, the excessive joy
That shone in ev'ry vassal's countenance

Has

Has given thy mother pleasure long unknown :—
'Tis many years since last our people met;
And though it brought past scenes of joy to mind,
And heav'd the sigh that they would ne'er return,
Yet it was source of happiness to hear
Their loyalty to thee, my son.

OSBERT.

Surely no greater bliss awaits a chief
Than the assurance of his people's love!
How grateful is it to a feeling heart
To know that thousands offer up their prayers,
And bless the day that gave their chieftain birth!

COUNTESS.

That bliss is thine! For never greater joy,
Nor more unfeign'd rejoicings were display'd
Than I beheld last night; the loud huzzas,
When each delighted veteran exclaim'd,
" Long live our noble chieftain!" shook the walls
As they had felt a thrill of trembling joy,
And sympathiz'd with me.

OSBERT.

I must endeavour to deserve their love.

COUNTESS.

Your heart will teach you how.

OSBERT.

My father's bright example shall inspire me.

COUNTESS.

Name not your father, though to speak his praise.

OSBERT.

I hop'd that time had worn the edge of woe,
And calm'd your sorrows.

COUNTESS.

Alas! my grief can never know a calm;—
Though time may sooth, it can't allay the storm

Of

Of sorrows such as mine; 'tis only thou,
And my Matilda, who support my life.

OSBERT.

Let not these melancholy thoughts obscure
The dawn of pleasure you but just describ'd:—
I now have power to avenge your wrongs,
Nor shall my vengeance sleep——while Malcolm lives
You are not safe—this night I lead my soldiers
To surprize his castle walls.

COUNTESS.

Then all is o'er! (*Faints on a Sofa.*)

OSBERT.

Help! help! she faints!

*Enter* MATILDA.

MATILDA.

Who calls for help? My mother senseless! (*Runs to her*)
O, Osbert! what has occasioned this?

OSBERT.

Ask me not now.

MATILDA.

My dearest mother!—'tis Matilda speaks—
Leave not thy daughter—Hah! she moves, she wakes;
Blest symptoms of returning life.

COUNTESS.

Ha! wretch!—what yet unsated?
My son—must he too fall? avaunt, fell murderer!

MATILDA.

What can this mean?

OSBERT.

Spare me, Matilda, spare me!

MATILDA.

O my mother—we are thy children.
Dost thou not know thy daughter?

COUNTESS.

COUNTESS.

I do—thy well known voice revives me.—
Where have I been?---it was a cruel dream
Wilder'd my senses;—where is my Osbert?

OSBERT.

Here at thy feet.

COUNTESS.

Help me to rise, my son.

MATILDA.

Retire awhile to rest your troubled mind.
Let me conduct you.

COUNTESS.

You shall, *(Gazes mournfully and stedfastly on Osbert)*
My son! my *only* son!—Farewell!

*(Goes out with* MATILDA.

OSBERT.

Farewell! thou dear unhappy child of woe.

*Enter* EDGAR.

EDGAR.

Hail! noble Osbert! I have news of import!
'Tis said the valiant clan of brave Monteith,
Your house's old ally, will join your troops
Against Lord Malcolm.

OSBERT.

That's welcome news.

EDGAR.

Methinks my lord looks sad.

OSBERT.

Alas! my friend! I have much cause of sadness;
Had'st thou beheld the recent scene of woe———

EDGAR.

EDGAR.

What scene of woe?

OSBERT.

My mother—Oh, my mother!—guess the rest,
And spare me the relation.

EDGAR.

Surely you have not yielded to her tears,
And broke your solemn vows?

OSBERT.

No! though her tears produced as keen a pang
As if my heart had bled in unison,
Distilling drop by drop; although I felt
Each sigh that left her bosom gall my breast,
My former resolution still remained
Fix'd as Edina's rock.

EDGAR.

You must not risk another interview——
But lo! your lovely sister.

*Enter* MATILDA.

OSBERT.

Welcome, Matilda!
Left you our mother more composed?

MATILDA.

A sad and pensive gloom dwelt on her cheek;
And though she seem'd calmer than heretofore,
It bore the semblance of stern resignation
More than tranquillity; for oft a sigh
Would steal, reluctant, from her throbbing breast—
In mournful accents oft she mentioned you,
Imploring Heaven, to divert your mind
From, what she term'd, your fatal resolution.
But tell me, Osbert!—What can you propose
That thus alarms her?

OSBERT.

I will tell thee all———
For though each female grace adorns thy mind,
Thou hast a soul that would disdain to see
Thy house dishonor'd by inglorious ease,
When our lost father's shade demands revenge!
This night we purpose to attack Glendore,
And take the murd'rer by surprize.

MATILDA.

O my lov'd brother!
Think of the danger that attends thy plan.
If thou should'st fall how wretched were our fate:
Who would protect us then? Consider—and
Have pity.

OSBERT.

Pity, too far indulg'd,
Weakens the nobler passions, and would smother
The genial flame which just resentment kindles
Against the cause of woe———My word is past:
The soldiers are instructed where to meet—
And shall the veteran clan my father led
In honor's glorious paths have cause to doubt
The courage of his son?

MATILDA.

No; I had rather my full heart should break
At seeing you depart where danger frowns,
Than hear of your dishonor!—though my sex
Will not allow me to be known in arms,
Yet I've a soul, impatient as your own
In honor's sacred cause——Go! and may conquest
Gladden your return!

EDGAR—*(aside.)*

Exalted maid!

OSBERT.

If it were possible,
Thy present conduct would encrease my love;
But 'tis already boundless.

MATILDA.

In no common cause
A sister bids thee to this doubtful war.
The glory, honor, justice of our house
All, all are stak'd———But, Osbert, I conjure thee
Let not impetuous courage urge thee on
Beyond the bounds of prudence: should'st thou fall,
Morven's proud tow'rs have no one to defend them.

EDGAR.

Who tempts his valued life
Must cut his way through my opposing breast---
If I should fall, no mother's tears will flow,
No beauteous sister mourn.

MATILDA.

If I may judge
From what I saw last night, when you bore off
The palm of vict'ry from the shouting ring,
You'll prove your promise true.

OSBERT.

Dearest Matilda! now farewell!
Edgar and I must to th' appointed spot
Where my clan meet---be thine the softer task
To sooth our mother's mind.

MATILDA.

Farewell! my Osbert. *(Osbert embraces Matilda.)*
Gallant youth, farewell! *(To Edgar.)*
*[Osbert and Edgar go out.*
Though fate denied young Edgar noble birth,
The proudest baron of our Scottish realm

Boasts not a soul more dauntless---Virgin fancy
Sure never imag'd a more lovely youth !
Yes ! he will guard my Osbert !---side by side [ranks,
They'll cleave their way through Malcolm's martial'd
And conquest mark their progress !---wherefore then
Beats my foreboding heart with ceaseless fears ?
Alas ! in triumph oft the victor falls !---
Oh Heav'n ! vouchsafe a patriot virgin's pray'r ;
Stretch thy protecting arm to shield the heroes
Whose swords are drawn against a tyrant murd'rer,
Who spurns thy sacred laws, tramples on justice,
Contemns humanity, and mocks religion ;
Who conquers more by treachery than arms ;
And, like a furious monster of the forests,
Ravens the produce of defenceless fields,
Then grins and stalks with savage satisfaction
O'er the wide desolation he has caus'd ! [*Exit.*

## SCENE II.

*Midnight.--The walls of Glendore Castle, with the great gates and draw-bridge.*

OSBERT *and* EDGAR *enter with their Soldiers.*

OSBERT.

Thus far all's well !
We cannot gain the summit of the walls
Without much danger of discovery.

EDGAR.

Might I advise,
'Twere better for a few to scale the ramparts,
Who might proceed in silence to the gates,
And ope them to the rest.

OSBERT.

OSBERT.

You counsel well: but who will tempt the danger?
I must remain to lead the clan.

EDGAR.

Be that danger mine!

OSBERT.

Thou hast a daring mind---select the troops
You wish to follow in the glorious cause.

EDGAR.

*(Edgar selects a party of Soldiers.)*

We're ready!

OSBERT.

Then, my friend, advance!
But have a care you don't alarm the watch.

EDGAR.

Fortune befriend us! *(they fix the scaling ladders:* EDGAR *ascends and goes over the walls, followed by the Soldiers.)*

OSBERT.

If they but pass unseen conquest is our's.
How my heart trembles, lest, thus near the goal,
Some dire mishap should wrest it from my grasp.
So from the wreck, uncertain of his fate,
The drowning seaman views the succ'ring bark
Launch'd for his rescue---while his anxious breast
Still dreads the shock of each succeeding wave,
Lest it o'erwhelm him ere he springs on board.

(EDGAR *opens the gates, lets down the draw-bridge, and comes out.)*

OSBERT.

By my soul's joy 'tis done!
*(To the soldiers)* Advance! mercy on all but Malcolm!

(OSBERT

(OSBERT *enters, followed by* EDGAR *and a party of Soldiers, when suddenly the Portcullis is drop't, and the alarum sounded. The soldiers without are struck with surprize, and exclaim*)---

We are betray'd!

(*But after a short pause proceed with the attack---when a Herald sounds a parley from the walls, and* MALCOLM *appears on the Ramparts with* OSBERT *in chains.*)

MALCOLM.

Soldiers of Morven! Lo, your chief in chains!
Would you behold his instant death, proceed—
If not—desist.—

OSBERT.

Heed not his treacherous words!—
My death is certain—let it be reveng'd!
Renew the attack!———

(*The soldiers obey, when* MALCOLM *seizes* OSBERT, *and holds his sword over him.*)

MALCOLM.

Thus then he dies!

(*The Soldiers instantly throw down their arms.*)

MALCOLM.

Bear him to the eastern tower,
And strictly guard him.

(OSBERT, *indignant, is borne off, and the Scene closes.*)

## SCENE III.

*The Walls and gates of Morven Castle. The* COUNT DI ZULMIO *enters, supported by Servants of the Castle.*

COUNT.

Strangers, I thank ye—Let me rest awhile—
I'm faint with buffetting the raging surge.
My limbs are sorely bruis'd—Your humanity
Has sav'd me from destruction, for my strength
Was quite exhausted—Oh! I am very faint.

1st SERVANT.

Cheer up, assistance is at hand.

COUNT.

Are my comrades safe?

SERVANT.

No, 'twas impossible to save their lives;
The surf prevented our approach.

COUNT.

Unhappy souls! I pity them—But say,
To whom am I indebted for my life?

1st SERVANT.

We serve the Earl of Morven,
Lord of this castle.

COUNT.

Will he grant me shelter?

1st SERVANT.

1st SERVANT.

Doubtless—who shall we say requires it?

COUNT.

I am of Sicily—the Count di Zulmio.
A brother's death, who had resided long
On cold Norwegian shores, occasion'd me
To tempt the dangers of the boist'rous north;
Whither our sails were bent, when the rude gale
Drove our unruly vessel on these rocks.

1st SERVANT.

Our lord is absent, and our noble lady
Immers'd in grief; but follow us, their gates
Were never shut against distress.

[*Exeunt into the Castle.*

## SCENE IV.

*A Dungeon in the Castle of Glendore, a lamp burning in the centre. Prisoner is discovered reclining.*

PRISONER.

When will my suff'rings cease!—O death!
Alarming only to the guilty mind,
When wilt thou take me to the pitying grave,
On whose cold pillow I may lay me down,
Forget my miseries, and rest in peace?
Wherefore thus leave me to a wretched fate,
Imploring thy compassion, while thou snatch'st
Reluctant thousands to thy dread abode?
Why rob the lover of his soul's delight?

The parent of his child?—Or why rejoice
To blight the youthful warrior's sanguine hopes,
And crop the sapling laurel from his brow?
O spare some happier victim!—spare the son
Of glad prosperity—and take my life
The willing sacrifice.

*(A door in the dungeon) suddenly bursts open, through which* EDGAR *enters, who starts, and gazes on the prisoner with astonishment.)*

PRISONER.

Is my prayer heard?
And art thou come the messenger of fate?
No, sure that countenance appears too mild
For scenes of blood.

EDGAR.

If not, my countenance belies my heart.

PRISONER.

What chance could bring thee to this wretched cell,
Unknown to all but Malcolm and his minion?

EDGAR.

'Tis scarce an hour
Since I became th' oppressor Malcolm's pris'ner;
But 'midst the general hurry to secure
A nobler captive, when my guards retir'd
They left unbarr'd a door within my cell,
Which open'd to these vaults.

PRISONER.

It was a lucky chance.

EDGAR.

Yet I rejoice not, for alas! my friend
Is still a prisoner!

PRISONER.

Who is that friend whose fate
Excites so warm a sympathy?

EDGAR.

The Earl of Morven!

PRISONER.

Lord Morven! *(With agitation and surprize.)*

EDGAR.

Why dost thou start?

PRISONER.

Said'st thou Lord Morven?
Oh! did he know the fate which I endure
He'd weep my sorrows and forget his own.
Indeed thou'st cause of grief! for such a friend
As gallant Alfred never woman bore.

EDGAR.

Hast thou not heard that noble Alfred long
Has tenanted the silent grave?

PRISONER.

And is he dead? The pride of envying chiefs!
How did he fall?

EDGAR.

Murdered by Malcolm.

PRISONER.

Ha!---murdered by him!——

EDGAR.

Yes!————
The love which all the country bore to Alfred,
His universal greatness and renown,
The tyrant long had view'd with jealous eyes:
But as the daughter's charms had gain'd his heart,

In

In hopes to win her, he conceal'd his envy
Until he found his passion unregarded;
When wild with rage and disappointed love,
He hired assassins to destroy her sire;
And, lest their hearts should falter—in disguise
He led the murd'rous band—they found the Earl
Beneath his ramparts, unsuspecting harm,
And rush'd upon him—long his mighty sword
Sustain'd th' unequal fight, and to the ground
Clove many a desp'rate wretch—at length o'erpower'd,
Cover'd with wounds, the glorious warrior fell.

PRISONER.

Oh! most inhuman!
But how did such a horrid crime escape
The law's just punishment?

EDGAR.

One of the wounded ruffians, ere he died,
Disclos'd the base, premeditated plan;
But, ere his hand had ratified his words,
That proof sufficient might be sent the king
T' arraign Lord Malcolm in his royal court,
Death seal'd his eyes; and thus the sacred ends
Of justice were destroyed.

PRISONER.

The guilty, sometimes, punishment escape;
But the pure fountain of the law doth flow
From an inviolable source, and none,
Without full evidence of guilt, condemneth.
Yet wherefore slept the vengeance of the son?—
The clan of Morven ever were renown'd
For martial enterprize and dauntless souls.
Thou said'st he was a pris'ner; has he too fallen
A hapless victim to the tyrant's wiles?

EDGAR—(*mournfully.*)

Alas! he has—— (*droops his head.*)

PRISONER.

PRISONER—(*clasping his hands.*)

All gracious Heaven!
Where slept thy justice then?—But lose not time
In tarrying with me—perchance the guards
May find their error and prevent your flight.

EDGAR.

Pardon the impulse—but I fain would know
Thy wonderous story?——

PRISONER.

'Tis a sad tale—but you'll forgive the tears
Shed at remembrance of protracted woe.
A raging fever had reduc'd my strength
To its last ebb, and death seem'd fast approaching,
When, one sad ev'ning, as I lay resign'd,
I saw my brother ope my chamber door—
A guilty cloud o'erhung his gloomy brow,
Yet I ne'er thought that he, whose ev'ry wish
My bounty granted, could intend me harm:
Judge then my horror! when, at his command,
I saw his barb'rous ministers approach,
Who dragg'd me, scarcely living, to this cell;
Where twice ten tedious years I've been immur'd,
Nor since has human converse reach'd mine ear,
Save from the wretch who brings my scanty meal.

EDGAR.

O cruelty unparallel'd!
But thou didst say it was thy brother's deed—
Unfold this mystery—tell me who thou art?

PRISONER—(*much agitated.*)

I am—a hopeless—friendless wretch—I was.
The lord of thousands and extended plains!
———Know then————O stranger!—(*Pauses.*)

EDGAR.

EDGAR.

Speak, I pray thee!

PRISONER.

Know then—in me—the Baron of Glendore!
And know, in Malcolm, my unnat'ral brother!

EDGAR.

Mighty powers! can it be possible? Art thou
The rightful Baron of Glendore, whose death
All Scotland long has mourn'd?

BARON.

I am that wreck of former greatness,
Depriv'd of all!—and by a brother's hand——
Yet I'd forgive this deed—forgive him all
The years of torture I have since endur'd,
Should he have spar'd—O stranger! if thou know'st,
Relieve the anguish of a father's heart,
My child!—my daughter!—has he spar'd her life?

EDGAR.

All that I know is this:
'Twas said, the sister of your noble lady
In bitter grief at your suppos'd demise
Fled, with your daughter, to her native land.

BARON.

Thy gladd'ning words
Are as a cordial to my woe-worn heart;
It beats again with hope—the welcome stranger
Revisits my sad breast! But fly thee hence—
—Farewell!—O that my trembling limbs had strength
To bear me with thee.

EDGAR.

Mine can support us both! But that I fear
The fate of captive friendship, I could bless

The

The chance that brought me hither to thy aid;
Let us away!

BARON.

No, generous youth!
I should retard your flight.

EDGAR.

My sire has serv'd you with unsullied honor,
And, in your service, gain'd those glorious wounds
He now so proudly vaunts. What would he say,
Were I to fly and leave his injur'd lord
In base captivity?---Shall it be said,
The son deserted whom the father serv'd?
Never!—I am Fitzallan's son!

BARON.

What! my old and faithful soldier?

EDGAR.

The same.

BARON.

Then I entreat thee go——
I'll not bring sorrow on his silver'd locks,
Who in my service shed his youthful blood,
By risking thy destruction.

EDGAR.

May shame light on me if I e'er desert you—
Consider, Sir! perhaps your orphan daughter,
Oppress'd by poverty, lives undistinguish'd,
And sighs in vain for your paternal care.
Death may have robb'd her of the gentle friend
With whom she quitted Scotland.

BARON.

Oh! thou hast waken'd all the father in me,
Thou excellent young man, and I must yield.
I know a secret passage in these vaults
Through which, since thou'st unbarr'd my prison door,
We may elude pursuit—" Let us begone;
" Tis near the time my keeper brings me food."

EDGAR.

Rest on my arm.

*(They go out,* EDGAR *supporting the Baron.)*

END OF ACT II.

## *ACT III.*

### SCENE I.

*A Gothic Room in one of the Towers of Glendore Castle.*
OSBERT *in Chains.*

OSBERT—*(after a pause.)*

Hither I came in virtue's sacred cause,
To punish guilt, and shew the wond'ring world
That vice, altho' she triumph'd for awhile
In seeming safety, in the end must fall!
Methought, in such a cause, approving Heav'n
Would lend assistance and direct my arm;
But how reverse the sad event has prov'd!
Myself the pris'ner of my deadliest foe—
My father's murd'rer!—death my certain lot.
And what is worse than death, my friends betray'd,
My people slaughter'd!—and Oh! my mother!——
But I'll not think—'twill turn my fever'd brain!

*Enter* MALCOLM.

MALCOLM.

Welcome, my lord!
This is unlook'd for joy!—I'm not prepar'd
For such a noble guest; therefore excuse
Not being treated as your rank requires.

OSBERT.

OSBERT.

By that insulting tone,
Thou art that hated, most accursed chief,
The bloody Malcolm !—yes; it must be so !
Thy countenance pourtrays it, and I see
The murd'rer painted in thy haggard eye.

MALCOLM.

Those epithets, methinks, are somewhat coarse,
And ill-become an uninvited guest,
Who finds himself so welcome ; tho', in truth,
I was not unappriz'd of your intentions.

OSBERT.

Curs'd be the traitor that betray'd them to thee.

MALCOLM.

He was no traitor !—

OSBERT.

He was a traitor to the cause of justice.

MALCOLM.

Thy words avail thee nought—remember now
Thou art my pris'ner, and thy life depends
Upon my mercy.

OSBERT.

Thy mercy !
Thou talk'st of that which dwells not in thy heart.
Perfidious wretch! believe not I expect
That he, who slew the sire, will spare the son !

MALCOLM.

Another word
From that detested tongue, and, by yon Heav'n,
I'll plunge this dagger in thy hated breast !—

OSBERT.

That were a valiant deed, and worthy thee!
To lift thy hand against a captive wretch,

Chain'd and defenceless——why d'ye hesitate?
'Twill add a laurel to that bloody wreath
My father's murd'rer gain'd!

MALCOLM.

Hold, heart!
I must not yield the palm of love to rage!
His present death would counteract my plans.--(*aside.*)
[*as he puts up the dagger it drops.*
Osbert, thou know'st thy life is in my power;
Yet there are terms, on which, if we agree,
I'll give thee freedom.

OSBERT.

I'd scorn thy terms, did not my mother's griefs
Plead in my breast!——What ransom will suffice?

MALCOLM.

Not all the gold the Lybian shores produce,
Not all the wealth of India's glittering mines,
Should buy thy freedom!—Yet there is a jewel
For which I'll give thee life and liberty.

OSBERT.

I understand you not.

MALCOLM.

Thou hast a sister.

OSBERT—*(starting with horror.)*

Horrible! most horrible!

MALCOLM.

What do'st thou start at?—I demand the maid,
Not as my mistress, but my lawful wife.
The fairest she of Caledonia's dames
Wou'd not disdain the offer.

OSBERT.

First shou'd these hands tear from her reeking breast
Her spotless heart!—First wou'd I give consent

That

That she shou'd wed a sable cannibal;
Whose barb'rous deeds cou'd never vie with thine!
What, yield my sister to the loath'd embrace
Of those blood-bolter'd arms that slew her sire!
Revolting nature shudders at the thought!
No! not the horrors of the ling'ring rack,
Not all the torments which the damn'd endure,
Shou'd wring consent to such a blasted deed!
Here, strike!—[*bares his breast.*]

MALCOLM.

No; thy life may be of use!
I'll send my terms unto the fair Matilda;
Who knows but she may not refuse my hand,
In token of regard to *such* a brother.
And if she shou'd, there may be other means
To gain this haughty maid—and that without
The dull incumb'rance of the marriage chains.

OSBERT.

Wretch! can offended Heav'n record thy words
And not direct its thunder at thy head?
O that my breath were poison to infect
The air thou breath'st, and send thee to that Hell
Thou hast so long deserv'd!

MALCOLM.

I'll leave thee to thy rage,
Lest thou provok'st me to thy instant death!
But mark, rash youth, m' irrevocable vow—
If thou does not consent, when next we meet,
To yield thy beauteous sister to my arms,
The subtlest torments which revenge can plan
Shall be thy lot, until thy ling'ring life,
Protracted to encrease thy torture more,
Yield to their agony. [*Exit.*

OSBERT.

Vengeance o'ertake thee!—(*sees the dagger and takes*
Ha! a dagger!—Now I defy thee, tyrant! [*it up.*)
Pardon, ye Powers of Mercy, the rash act.
My death alone can baffle his vile schemes,
And thus I———(*Emma enters through a secret pannel in the wainscot, and coming behind him unseen arrests his uplifted arm.*)

EMMA—(*holding his arm.*)

Hold thy desp'rate hand!

OSBERT—(*starting with surprise.*)

Amazement! and illusion!

EMMA.

Does this become the warlike chief of Morven?

OSBERT.

Art thou a guardian angel, sent
To charm me from the heav'n-detested crime?

EMMA.

I am Lord Malcolm's nearest relative!

OSBERT.

Impossible! Thou rather seem'st
Form'd to inhabit the celestial spheres
Than this abode of horror and oppression!

EMMA.

Alas! no spirit of the spheres am I,
But like thyself a pris'ner!—My apartments
Communicating with this eastern tower,
I overheard thy converse with the tyrant;
And when he left thee, urg'd by pity, came
Thro' yonder secret pannel to avert
Thy direful purpose!

OSBERT.

And has my wretched fate
Excited pity in so fair a bosom?
That thought wou'd cheer me midst a thousand woes.
But, gentle stranger,
Whence spring the sorrows of thy guiltless heart?
Surely the tyrant's cruelty extends not
To his own kindred!

EMMA.

In infancy I lost my parents,
Who left me heiress of these vast domains
Which Malcolm now usurps, while I am kept
In close confinement, and reported dead,
That he may tranquilly enjoy my birth-right.

OSBERT.

Eternal providence!—Art thou the daughter
Of that illustrious chief, Lord Malcolm's brother?
I've ofttimes heard you quitted Scotland's realm
And fled for shelter to the south of Tweed.

EMMA.

But here I've liv'd secluded!
The mournful history of my father's death
I learnt from her, to whose indulgent care
I owe the culture of my orphan mind,
My mother's sister; who, born in England,
Largely inherited those genial virtues
For which that country's fam'd; with her, imprisonment
Lost all its horrors—in her society
I liv'd contented and forgot my woes;
But now, alas! I've lost my only solace:
The bloom of health had long forsa'en her cheek,
And she untimely fell a hapless victim
To the hand of grief!—(*weeps.*)

OSBERT.

Weep not, gentle maid!—By Heav'n! I'll fly,
And strive to gain admission to the tyrant!
Then, while my dagger quivers in his breast,
Proclaim aloud your birth!——The wond'ring clan,
Rous'd at the mention of your father's name,
Will hail you mistress of your lawful rights!

EMMA.

Let not this gen'rous ardor
Urge you to rush upon your own destruction!
Surrounded by his guards, Lord Malcolm rests
Secure from ev'ry danger, and th' attempt
Must render ev'ry other hope abortive.
Let us examine the adjoining chamber,
Whose gothic casement overlooks the shores,
Where Spey unites her waters with the deep!

OSBERT.

My rash resolves yield to thy gentler counsel.
A double motive now my bosom fires
With thrist of liberty to rescue thee,
And wreak dire vengeance on the usurper's head!

[*They go out through the pannel.*

## SCENE II.

*An Apartment in Morven Castle*—MATILDA *and the Count.*

MATILDA.

Urge me no more!
Reflect, Count Zulmio!—Is this a time
To speak of love, when grief alone usurps

The

The empire of my breast?—While yet I dread
The recent shock will prove my mother's death!

COUNT.

Then may I hope, when happier times approach,
You will permit me to renew my suit?
From the kind int'rest you were pleas'd to take
In my misfortunes, I had dar'd to hope
My passion was return'd.

MATILDA.

My lord, presume not,
That those attentions which I may have paid you
Proceeded from any other source than pity!
I tell you frankly, I admire your virtues,
But my heart's another's.

COUNT.

What endless bliss has Heav'n in store for him!

MATILDA—*(aside.)*

Alas! not so, I fear!

COUNT.

Unhappy Zulmio!
Why did the raging tempest spare thy life,
To suffer, worse than death—love unreturn'd!

MATILDA.

Some fair Sicilian maid,
Whose heart is open to return your love,
Will soon obliterate the faint impression
Of my inferior charms.

COUNT.

Absence may cure
A slight attachment: when the bearded shaft
Is deeply rooted in the bleeding heart
It but inflames the wound!

*Enter*

*Enter* EDGAR.

MATILDA.

Dare I believe my sight? O, joy unlook'd for!—
But where!—O where's my brother? [*Edgar turns aside*
Cruel silence!—Rack not my bosom thus! [*in distress.*

EDGAR.

He lives!———

MATILDA.

And free?

EDGAR.

Alas! not so.

MATILDA.

Yet while he lives, and *thou* art free, there's hope!
For I'm assur'd, if valor can achieve
My Osbert's freedom, there's no cause of fear.

EDGAR.

Not if my life can purchase his release.

MATILDA.

Such generosity demands
My warmest gratitude.—But I must fly
To cheer my mother's hopes and sooth her sorrows.
Edgar! you'll in my brother's absence greet
This noble stranger, whom the recent storm
Wreck'd on our coast.—My lord, this gallant youth
Is worthy of your friendship. [*Exit.*

COUNT.

If I mistake not I have found my rival!—(*aside.*)
The sudden impulse of surprize and joy
At your arrival, nearly overcame
The fair Matilda.—Thou'rt a happy man! (*sneeringly.*)

EDGAR.

EDGAR.

A soul benevolent as her's
Expands its courtesy to all.

COUNT.

Is there no *softer* cause
Than general courtesy?

EDGAR.

I do not comprehend you!

COUNT.

Why blush to own
What your fond eyes betray?

EDGAR.

My lord, *my* heart disdains deceit!
Nor does it know a thought that shames my tongue!
But, I entreat, when next inclin'd to mirth
You choose some fitter subject—nor prophane,
With ill-tim'd merriment, Matilda's name! [*Exit.*

COUNT.

I'm not deceiv'd, it is as I suspected;
His zeal's too warm to spring from aught but love!
S'death! am I slighted for a beardless boy?
It galls my pride!—But I'll not tamely see
This stripling triumphing where I'm refus'd!
She must—she shall be mine! [*Exit.*

## SCENE III.

*Glendore Castle---Enter* MALCOLM *and* MORTON.

MALCOLM—*(entering.)*

'Tis strange how this report cou'd get abroad!

MORTON.

MORTON.

'Tis so, my lord!—But that it has is certain:
For now, as I was walking near the ramparts,
A wrinkled gossip pluckt me by the sleeve,
And, in a whisper, ask'd me if 'twere true
Her late lord's daughter still surviv'd, and was
A pris'ner in the castle?—shook her head,
And cried, "God bless her!"

MALCOLM.

Curse on the babbler!——Learn what I purpose:
I've here a deed by which I bind myself
To pay her annually a certain sum,
On this express condition: that Glendore,
Its rights, immunities, and wide domains,
Are formally surrendered unto me.
If she can be persuaded to sign this,
Being of age to alienate her lands,
All will be well—if not, we know the worst!
Hast thou commanded her attendance hither?

MORTON.

I have, my lord! but mention'd nought
Touching the purport of the interview.

*Enter* EMMA.

EMMA.

What wou'd Lord Malcolm?

MALCOLM.

Come, my fair niece, look not so sternly on me.
You seem, of late, grown weary of retirement!

EMMA.

Of *bondage* I have long been weary!

MALCOLM.

Come, come, no more of this—
There's now no cause.——

No

EMMA.

No cause!—
I've all my days been wretched—never known
A parent's love!—and thou, who *should'st* have been
The guardian and instructor of my youth,
Hast prov'd my bitt'rest foe!

MALCOLM—*(offering a paper.)*

Read my intentions——
I've here to you, and to your heirs for ever,
Secur'd, by good and lawful obligation,
The yearly sum of fifteen hundred marks.
These, with your freedom, are this instant your's,
If you'll renounce all privilege and right
To those domains which appertain unto
The castle of Glendore—without delay,
Fly Caledonian's realm—and by an oath
Bind yourself never to return again!
An honourable escort shall attend you
Beyond the borders.

EMMA.

Think not so meanly of me!——No!
The heiress of Glendore, tho' rob'd of all
The outward trappings of distinguished birth,
Has that within of which no mortal pow'r
Shall e'er bereave her!—Nor shall th' alluring charms
Of profer'd liberty (howe'er desired)
Create a thought, which would not well beseem
A Scotish baron's daughter!

MALCOLM.

Forget'st thou, simple maid,
That, what for thy sake I'm content to treat for,
Is mine already?—By possession mine!
And who shall wrest it from me?

EMMA.

A day may come, when all thy boasted pow'r
Will prove too weak to prop thy ill-got greatness!
Who holds by force, holds by a doubtful tenure!

MALCOLM.

And who taught thee the mysteries of fate?
Think not by prophesying ills to scare me!
If thus thou slight'st my offer, and prefer'st
The shade of honor to substantial bliss,
Here waste the summer of thy days in tears;
And when their autumn shall obscure the bloom
Of that disdainful cheek, repent, too late,
Thy present folly!—But, haughty Emma, know,
I can encrease thy woes, and make confinement
Wear a less pleasing face!——Declare thy choice!

EMMA.

You've had my answer!——Know, profidious man,
I scorn your offer, and despise your threats. [*Exit.*

MALCOLM.

I'll find some means to bend that stubborn spirit!
But, Morton, thou must tarry here no longer:
Thou should'st, ere now, have view'd the tow'rs of Morven.
The soldiers destin'd for the service, wait thee.
By Heav'n! it would o'erjoy me to obtain
The haughty maid, and not bereave my soul
Of its revenge on Osbert!—Go!——yet stay!—
How fares thy pris'ner?

MORTON.

I must deceive him,
Or I shall suffer for suppos'd neglect.—(*aside.*)
He will complain no more!—the cold remains
Of that once fav'rite son of martial glory,
Are now contain'd within the narrow limits
Of the devouring grave.

MALCOLM.

MALCOLM—*(agitated.)*

Hah!——Dead!—my brother!—Oh!——

MORTON.

'Twas not the rigor of imprisonment:
A wasting fever wore the thread of life:
Then why shou'd you repine?—His death secures
Your present power, and confirms you lord
Of these extended plains!

MALCOLM.

True—yet——Come, Morton, away!
Secure Matilda and your fortune's made! [*Exeunt.*

END OF ACT III.

## *ACT IV.*

### SCENE I.

*An Apartment in Morven Castle.—The Countess and* MATILDA *discovered---The Countess reclining on a Couch.*

COUNTESS.

O, my lov'd child!
Death seem'd approaching with such hasty steps,
I thought not e'en thy tender filial care
Could stay my progress to a happier world;
But the fond hopes thy soothing words have rais'd,
Renew my strength and make me bear to live.

MATILDA.

Behold *him* here on whom those hopes depend.

*Enter* EDGAR.

COUNTESS.

Surely thou'rt more than mortal!
Friendship, like thine, exceeds the narrow bounds
Of human souls;—I blush to offer thanks,
They are so poor a recompense.

EDGAR.

Illustrious lady! what do I intend
Beyond the friendship which I owe your son?
"'Tis the sad scarcity of virtuous deeds
"That makes such trifling services appear

"Of

"Of greater merit than they really are.
If't be the will of gracious Heav'n, that I
Should prove successful—I am overpaid;—
If not, I perish in a glorious cause!

COUNTESS.

Matchless youth!
I know that praise is least acceptable
To those who merit most.—Say, how stand the troops?
Are they dispirited by ill success?
If so, thou'st courage in thy single breast
T' inspire a host!

EDGAR.

Their late repulse but wets the edge of valor;
Enrag'd each warrior calls aloud, "To arms!
Give us our chief! or let us share his fate!"

COUNTESS.

O, how thy words revive me!
In fancy I already clasp my son,
And my full heart runs o'er with gratitude
To his deliverer.

*Enter* SERVANT.

SERVANT.

Madam, a herald just arriv'd
From Baron Malcolm, gave me this—(*gives a paper*) address'd
"To him, who now commands Lord Morven's troops."
[*Exit.*

COUNTESS.

What can this mean?
Edgar, break the seal.——I dread to listen.

EDGAR—(*reads.*)

"Lord Malcolm, having heard that an attack
"Is meditated to release the earl,

" His lawful pris'ner, sends the only terms
" On which he'll grant his life, and set him free."
(EDGAR *starts and pauses.*)

MATILDA.

What means that countenance of horror ?
Say what's the ransom ? howsoever great,
It must be given !

EDGAR.

Ye Heav'nly pow'rs, forbid !—ask me no more,
I cannot read the curs'd proposal.

COUNTESS.

Does he require this castle and domain?
They shall be granted, if he'll spare my son.

EDGAR.

No, they are nought to what the wretch demands.
Seek not to know ;—let it suffice to say,
His terms are such, they must not be accepted.

MATILDA.

Not accepted ! they shall ! they must !
What's of such value as my brother's life ?

EDGAR.

Thy brother's *honor !*

COUNTESS.

Why torture thus my bosom with suspense?
I beg !---I charge thee to proceed!

EDGAR.

O then prepare to feel a keener pang
Than any you've endur'd.
First he declares, " the moment of attack
" Shall be the moment of Lord Morven's death !
" But if—the——fair Matilda——will consent

" To

"To be—his—bride——her brother's free;—if not ———He dies.—(*lets fall the paper.*)

[MATILDA *shrieks, and throws herself on her mother's neck.*]

COUNTESS.

O, my child!
Fly not to this sad bosom for relief.

MATILDA.

Where shall I find it else?
O horror! horror!

EDGAR.

How shall I speak of comfort
Who need so much.—(*aside.*)—O yield not to despair!
Perhaps he will relent!

MATILDA.

Relent!—who!—what!—Malcolm?
Rather expect the gaunt and hungry wolf
To soften at the bleatings of the ewe,
As from the fold he bears her trembling lamb.

COUNTESS.

Oh! that the grave would ope its friendly jaws
And shield me from my sorrows.

MATILDA.

If thou did'st ever love thy lost Matilda,
Let not these gloomy thoughts absorb thy soul.—
I could support *my woes*; but, to behold
My mother thus, will drive me to distraction:
Let those misfortunes we've already known,
Teach us to bear the present.

COUNTESS.

What were my former sufferings,
What were they all to this unequall'd grief!

"In them I had no dreadful choice of horrors!"
No evil ratified by my own voice.
But now—my daughter!—I must either yield
Thy spotless bosom to pollution's arms,
Or seal the murder of my darling son!
Dreadful alternative!——

MATILDA.

This is too much—now Heav'n assist me!---
Go, Edgar!—bid the herald tell Lord Malcolm
His terms are granted;—yes, whatever pangs
The sacrifice may cost—he shall not die!

[EDGAR *starts.*

COUNTESS.

Not die!—celestial sound!
But Oh! my daughter!

MATILDA.

Edgar, go!—His looks are daggers to my heart.(*aside.*)
Your friend shall live!

EDGAR.

But how?
To suffer worse than twenty thousand deaths,
Could noble Osbert brook to hold a life
Gain'd by dishonor!—by a sister's shame!
O wrong him not so much as to suppose it.—
And thou, unhappy, gen'rous maid, reflect
What endless misery would be thy lot.——
How could'st thou at the holy altar swear
To love the wretch who blasted all thy joys?
How endure to join that snowy hand with his,
Reeking with gore! thy murder'd father's gore!
Does not thy heart chill at the fearful thought,
And freeze with horror?

MATILDA.

Horror, indeed!
But oh! my brother's bleeding form appears

To

To my distemper'd mind, and pleads against you:
He must be sav'd!—I will become the victim!

EDGAR—*(drawing his sword.)*

First let me perish, or the tyrant fall!
*(As he is going off precipitately, meets* OSBERT, *who runs and throws himself at his mother's feet—*EDGAR *staggers back and catches* MATILDA, *who faints.)*

COUNTESS.

Ha! my Osbert!——can it be thee!
Or is't thy visionary form appears
To my bewilder'd fancy?

OSBERT.

Let this embrace convince you!—*(embraces her.)*

COUNTESS.

It is my son! O, all ye guardian powers,
Be doubly thank'd!—it is my living son!

EDGAR.

"How shall I hide [awhile
"My heart's too fond emotions."*(aside.)*—Oh, cease
Your transports! lo, this breathless angel!

OSBERT.

Ha! my sister! look up, Matilda!
Unclose those eyes, and welcome my return.

MATILDA.

It is his voice!—yes! I do behold him!
This joy's too great!—but when must I depart?
O God! that such excess of happiness
Conceals a sting so deadly.

OSBERT.

What can this mean?

COUNTESS.

Behold that paper: 'twill unravel all.

OSBERT—*(taking up the paper.)*

Could'st thou suppose me to have been so base?
No; death, in all its dreadful forms of torture,
Had been the greatest bliss—an ecstasy
Compar'd to life on such disgraceful terms.

MATILDA.

Then I indeed am bless'd!—*(embraces* OSBERT.*)*

OSBERT—*(to* EDGAR.*)*

My friend!
To see thee here completes my happiness.
By what good fortune art thou free?

EDGAR.

The present time's too precious to be spent
In long details;—let joy alone prevail!—
Beneath your roof you have an unknown guest,
Whose presence will surprise you more than all
These wonderful events—'till now, I nam'd him not.
Lest the relation of his mournful tale
Should wake new terrors. [*Exit.*

OSBERT.

Who can this be?

COUNTESS.

Oh, my son! when I behold you here,
And, with a retrospective look, review
Our recent sorrows, my full bosom glows
With awful admiration of that Being,—
Who, as the pilot at the helm of fate,
Has steer'd our shatter'd bark thro' seas of woe,
To anchor safely in the port of joy.

(EDGAR *leads in the Baron.)*

MATILDA—*(seeing them approach.)*

Behold the reverend stranger!
"What graceful majesty adorns his gait!

"His

" His wrinkled brow seems rather to proceed
" From long affliction than the hand of time,
" As hoary frosts, in April mornings, nip
" The blooming beauties of the fragrant spring."

OSBERT—*(to the Baron.)*

Welcome, unknown!

BARON.

To you, my lord, I am indeed unknown;
But I before have seen this noble lady,
Tho' years, long years of sorrow, since have pass'd.

COUNTESS.

Surely I've heard that voice!

BARON.

You have———
When happier accents dwelt upon my tongue,
Oft has it welcom'd, oft invited you,
To share the gaieties my mansion offer'd;
And in your turn, your's oft has greeted me
In friendship's warmest terms; but care has since
Worn this rough visage with so many furrows,
That 'tis no wonder you cannot discern
The faded outline of a friend once lov'd.

(OSBERT, MATILDA, *and* EDGAR, *talk apart.*)

COUNTESS.

Pardon these tears:
Your accents call to mind a valued friend,
Who long has rested in the arms of death;
Could I believe departed souls had pow'r
To quit their circumscrib'd and long clos'd tombs,
I shou'd have thought I had convers'd with him.—
Where have you seen me?

BARON.

Dost thou remember that all-glorious day,
When the united forces of Glendore

And

And Morven, led by their respective chiefs,
Return'd victorious from the banks of Clyde?

COUNTESS.

Remember! --O Heav'ns! full well I do;
But ev'ry word you utter makes me doubt
If with the dead or living I converse.
Why thus mysterious? What of that day?

BARON.

That day your presence grac'd the echoing hall
Of the then joyful—now disgrac'd Glendore.—
That day, with you, I led the festive dance.

COUNTESS.

Merciful powers! 'tis he!—my son, my son!
Behold your father's earliest friend restor'd!

OSBERT.

I've heard from Edgar all the wond'rous tale;
And I rejoice not more, my noble guest,
To see you thus, as if from death restor'd,
Than that I've tidings which will glad your ear,
And change your sorrows to unlook'd for joy.—
You've heard, no doubt, my late unhappy fate,
Which I had still endur'd but that an angel
Procur'd me freedom; how, I'll tell hereafter,
And haste to say, that angel was——your daughter.

BARON.

My daughter! my Emma! this cancels all,
Now indeed I live: O how my bosom longs
To clasp her and bestow a father's blessing.—
But ah! where is she? my brother's pris'ner;
There, there again I bleed.

OSBERT.

Fear not; the tyrant had no other motive
To hold her captive, than to seize her portion.

BARON.

But when shall I behold her?

OSBERT.

You must, as yet, remain in secresy,
While we consult together on the means
Which may seem best at once to rescue her,
And wrest your birth-right from the th'usurper's grasp.

BARON.

Such was your father,
Warm in affection, eager to bestow
Timely assistance to a suff'ring friend,
The pride of virtue, and the scourge of vice. [thee,
(*To* EDGAR)—My guardian angel, let me now embrace
For thou'rt the source of all my happiness.

EDGAR.

To Heaven!
The all protecting friend of innocence,
Return thy thanks, they are not due to me:
It was ordain'd thou should'st not suffer more,
And I was but the instrument of fate
In thy deliv'rance.

COUNTESS.

Friend of my early days,
Let us withdraw and dedicate an hour
To talk o'er former scenes of happiness:
" There is an inexpressive luxury,
" A pleasing pain, known to congenial souls,
" In calling past occurrences to mind:
" Thus the brave vet'ran, leaning on his crutch,
" While he recounts the battles nobly fought
" In earlier times, perceives a trembling glow
" Of nameless rapture play around his heart,
" And, in idea, wins the field again."
Osbert, we have a noble stranger here,
The Count di Zulmio, whom fate has driven
To our northern coast.

OSBERT.

OSBERT.

I will attend him.———Edgar!

[*Exeunt* COUNTESS, MATILDA, *and* BARON.

Hast thou e'er felt the pangs of hopeless love?

EDGAR.

My lord!

OSBERT.

Has thy whole soul e'er doted on an object,
Whose beauty, vying with Aurora's blush,
Nought but the brightness of her mind eclips'd:
Hast thou so lov'd, and fear'd to love in vain?

EDGAR.

Is then what I dar'd scarcely tell myself
Known to her brother.—(*aside.*)—Had we the power
To direct our love———

OSBERT.

Where could it be so well bestow'd
As on the beauteous Emma?

EDGAR—(*starting.*)

Emma!
How near my feelings had betray'd me.—(*aside.*)

OSBERT.

Why start?—know'st thou aught
Concerning Emma Malcolm?

EDGAR.

Till you declar'd it
I knew not she remain'd at Glendore Castle.

OSBERT.

It chanc'd my prison chamber
Join'd her apartments by a secret way,
Known to herself alone, thro' which we oft
Discours'd together on our cruel fortunes:
She spake so frank, so delicately free,
That, while I listen'd, my whole soul was charm'd,

And

And in her presence I forgot my danger:
Not so the beauteous maid; meeting this morn,
Anxious she led me to a gothic casement
That overlook'd the banks of rapid Spey,
And ask'd, in tender accents, if I thought
The fearful height too dang'rous to attempt;
Then gently from her snowy bosom drew
A silken cord, which she confess'd she wove
To prosper my escape.

EDGAR.

Inimitable virtue!

OSBERT.

Oh, Edgar! Edgar! when the hour arriv'd
For my deliv'rance, tho' it gave me life,
I parted with regret.———The gen'rous maid
So sweetly bade adieu, my flatt'ring heart
Made me believe she wish'd to meet again.

EDGAR.

What shou'd prevent it?
When it is known abroad the Baron lives,
The tyrant must restore him to his rights,
And then the lovely Emma may be thine.

OSBERT.

Too well I know the villain, to believe
He'll yield the fruits of his iniquity,
Unless compell'd; I dread he'll keep the daughter
An hostage to prevent the father's vengeance.

EDGAR.

What's to be done?

OSBERT.

I will dispatch a herald to Glendore,
And brave the enemy to single combat;
Should he have courage to accept the challenge,
My sword shall cleave his crested helm in twain,
And write my Emma's freedom in his blood. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

## SCENE II.

*A Romantic Scene near Morven Castle*---MATILDA *enters.*

MATILDA.

Reason, how weak art thou oppos'd to love!
Alas! I've cherish'd the deceitful flame,
Which stole, in guise of friendship, to my bosom,
'Till my heart burns with unextinguish'd love:
But it shall ne'er be said, Matilda's choice
Sullied the ancient honors of her house,
*(*EDGAR *enters unperceived.)*
Ah, Edgar! tho' I love thee to distraction,
The tender impulse must remain unknown,
And prey in secret on my aching heart.
Oh Heav'ns!---*(seeing* EDGAR.*)*

EDGAR.

Had I not heard,
Edgar and love in the same sentence blended,
The pangs I feel had ever been conceal'd.

MATILDA.

It now were useless to deny
A passion I've incautiously betray'd:
But mark me, Edgar, tho' I own thy virtues
And gallant conduct have enthrall'd my heart,
Honor will bid thee not to cherish hopes
Which ever must be vain.—
Alas! you know hereditary pride
Is Osbert's only fault.

EDGAR.

Oh, noble maid!
Till now I never mourn'd my humble birth,
Which makes, what else were rapture, endless woe:
Was ever mortal wretchedness like mine,

To

To know I am belov'd by my soul's idol,
And yet to know she never can be mine.

MATILDA.

'Tis dangerous to behold him !---(*aside.*)
Let me conjure you, by our hopeless love,
Not to detain me longer.---O reflect !
Should we be seen in this sequestered spot,
At this late hour, suspicion might suggest
Somewhat injurious to my fame.——farewell !

[OSBERT *and the* COUNT *enter unperceived.*

EDGAR.

Ah, stay !——a moment stay !
'Tis my misfortune, and I must adore you :
Yet not for worlds should my presumptuous heart
Indulge a thought to wound your brother's pride ;
I ask but this———

MATILDA.

Be quick, I must away !
Or else my heart will break.---(*aside.*)

COUNT—(*to Osbert.*)

Now then, my lord, were my suspicions false ?
Are those the looks of *friendship?*

OSBERT.

I scarce believe my sight !

EDGAR.

When I'm remov'd for ever from your sight,
As I shall shortly be, check not the tear
Due to the misery your beauty caus'd :
Yet, ere I go, let me thus take your hand,
Press it with sacred ardor to my lips,
Cast a last look on your forbidden charms,
And sigh a long adieu !---Oh ! may your heart,
A stranger to the pangs that torture mine,
Know everlasting peace.

OSBERT—(*enraged.—The Count endeavouring to restrain him.*)

'Sdeath, I can hold no longer !

MATILDA.

MATILDA.

Oh never---never !
Farewell, unhappy youth ! since fate decrees
I can't be thine———I'll never be another's !
*(As* MATILDA *is going out she meets* OSBERT, *who looks sternly at her as she passes.)*

OSBERT—*(to Edgar.)*

Is this your boasted friendship ?---ungrateful!

EDGAR.

Hear me, my lord.---

OSBERT.

Hold !
Have I not seen, been witness to your treach'ry ?
Seek not to palliate the crime by falsehood.

EDGAR.

I disdain it !---you're deceiv'd !

OSBERT.

No!
Thou hast, by secret artful means, seduc'd
My sister's heart---and, while my open nature
Confided in thee, would'st have basely stabb'd
The honor of my house---but I'll prevent it.
This dark ingratitude has quite effac'd
All sense of former worth.

EDGAR.

Accuse me not unheard.

OSBERT.

I know thou hast betray'd me.

EDGAR.

How ! betray'd you!

OSBERT.

Yes! like a villain
Treacherously betray'd me.

EDGAR.

Like a villain! down, down, rebellious heart—
Who else dar'd tell me so?

COUNT.

Noble Osbert,
Be not so warm, consider the temptation [man,
To a humble mind. *(To Edgar)* Let me advise, young
You think no more of these ambitious views,
Lest you repent it.

EDGAR.

And let me advise
You curb your taunting tongue—I owe no debt
Of gratitude to you, therefore beware,
If you regard your safety. *(To Osbert!)* To you, my lord,
I own I'm much indebted; but observe,
Though of a peasant born, my soul abhors
Much as your own an action of dishonor!

[*Exit.*

COUNT.

Ambitious boy!
'Tis fit he should be taught to know his sphere;
His insignificance protected him,
Or he had felt my rage.

OSBERT.

In truth, Count Zulmio,
When I reflect on all his former conduct,
I cannot reconcile the present.

COUNT.

Nay, my good lord, it is too plain for doubt;
Did you not see how artfully he woo'd,

How,

How, when your sister half reluctant turn'd
And would have quitted him, he seiz'd her hand,
And dar'd defile it with presumptuous kisses?

*Enter* BARON.

BARON.

What have ye done,
Ungenerous cruel men?

OSBERT.

What means this frantic grief?

BARON.

Nay, thou can'st answer best,
Whose barb'rous usage drove him from your door,
The gentlest, and the bravest of mankind.

(OSBERT *walks away much agitated.*)

COUNT.

'Twas fit his treach'ry should be rebuk'd.

BARON.

His treach'ry! 'twere well indeed for thee,
Did half the virtues of that faultless youth
Dwell in thy bosom.—Say, what was the crime
Thy curs'd suspicion fram'd?

COUNT.

Corroborated facts, attested proofs
Declare, how much this favorite deserves
Those epithets your partial age bestows.
Which of his virtues urg'd him to repay
The boundless friendship of this noble lord,
By the seduction of his sister's heart?

BARON.

Is that his fault?

OSBERT.

We but now surpriz'd them,
In tender converse, or I'd not believe it.

BARON.

I cannot think
That Edgar us'd dishonorable means
To win the fair Matilda ;—and can you,
Whose passions glow with all the fire of youth,
Condemn your friend, because his gentle nature
Could not behold your sister's peerless charms
With cold indifference?

OSBERT.

Surely, my lord, you would not have me dim
The ancient lustre of the house of Morven
By an alliance with a peasant's son?

BARON.

My early days have prov'd
The boundless friendship which I bear your house
But pardon me, if in the present case
I differ much from your ideas of honor.
'Tis not the birth, but actions of a man,
That stamp with dignity—or brand with shame;
O think how much you owe that generous youth,
And let not pride obscure your gratitude.

OSBERT.

I know my debt, and should I find
Myself deceiv'd, I will atone———

BARON.

It is, alas! too late!
As now I met him in th' adjoining grove,
Seeing despair and wildness in his look,
I sought to know the cause—pressing my hand
With frantic ardor to his throbbing breast,

He

He said—"I go for ever from the castle:"
Then, while the crimson blush of injur'd pride
And conscious innocence suffus'd his cheek,
Call'd Heav'n to witness you had deeply wrong'd him,
And darted from my sight, I fear for ever.

OSBERT—(*aside.*)

The sudden gust of my impetuous rage
Urg'd me too far.

BARON.

Heav'n knows I lov'd that youth
With all the fond affection of a father!
Oh! had he known, and lov'd my darling Emma,
Happy indeed, thrice happy I had been,
To've call'd him son, and shar'd my love between them;
But you've destroy'd my peace of mind for ever!
Oh, Edgar! Edgar! shou'd you ne'er return,
My sorrowing heart will break.

[*Exit.*

OSBERT.

His grief o'erpow'rs me.

COUNT.

An old man's passions
Are as the waters of a glassy lake,
Disturb'd by ev'ry gust, but quickly calm'd.
Let not the weakness of his age distress you
When I am gone.

OSBERT.

Is then your resolution fix'd to leave us?

COUNT.

It is;
My native land, at war with haughty Spain,
Demands my arm.

OSBERT.

Then I'd not have thee stay:
In war, or peace, the patriot's chief desire
Should be the glory of his native land.

[*Exeunt.*

## SCENE III.

*A wood*—MALCOLM *and* MORTON *habited as Soldiers.*

MALCOLM.

Have you dispos'd the soldiers as I order'd?

MORTON.

They lie conceal'd within an hundred paces,
Like couching tigers waiting for their prey.

MALCOLM.

'Tis well—Osbert must pass this way
To the appointed spot—the time approaches:
Let's to our ambush then—his own contrivance
Will again betray him. (*They conceal themselves.*

*Enter* OSBERT *and a party of Soldiers.*

OSBERT.

There lies the road
That leads your chief to glory or the grave.—
From yon small mount you may behold the combat;
But mark!—I charge you keep your weapons sheath'd,
Nor interfere, unless foul play be offer'd,
Malcolm and I alone decide the quarrel.

SOLDIER.

My lord, behold
Yon thicket glittering with polish'd steel:
Mischief's on foot---ha! they rush out---their number
Trebles ours.—

OSBERT.

Draw—since we're betray'd,
Let the vile traitors learn, by our example,
How difficult it is to conquer men,
Who'll yield to death alone.--(MALCOLM's *soldiers rush out, and attack* OSBERT *and his party, who maintain their ground sometime, but are at length o'erpower'd by numbers---two soldiers attack* OSBERT *with great fury, whom they overthrow; one of them is going to kill him, when the other exclaims—*
Hold!
Revenge were poor from any hand but mine! [*ver.)*
Know,'tis Malcolm bids thee tremble! *(lifts up his bea-*

OSBERT.

I scorn to tremble at a villain's threats!

MALCOLM.

This to thy heart then! (*lifts his sword, when a party of Soldiers rush in, led by* EDGAR.)

EDGAR.

Tyrant, desist! (*strikes down his sword.* OSBERT *rises and encounters* MALCOLM, *while* EDGAR *and his party join* OSBERT's, *and attack* MALCOLM's *Soldiers, most part of whom they beat off, the rest are made prisoners*——MALCOLM *falls.*)

OSBERT.

Now!—but thou art conquer'd,
And though a villain thou call'st forth compassion.
Receive

Receive thy life from him thou would'st have murder'd.
Live—and repent.

MALCOLM.

Life thou can'st not bestow, 'tis ebbing fast;
Nor has thy sword obtain'd so bright a conquest,
As now, thy gen'rous mercy—that o'ercame
My mortal strength—but this subdues my soul.
My haughty spirit sinks abash'd before you;
And on the verge of the wide-yawning grave,
Reflection turns its retrospective eye,
And starts with horror at m'uncancell'd crimes:
But, if indulgent to repentant vice,
Fate will prolong my life a few short hours,
Perhaps I still have pow'r to make atonement
To one whom my ambition much has injur'd,
Altho' he knows it not — but——oh——(*faints.*

OSBERT.

He faints!---Haste, bear him hence!
Try ev'ry healing herb to staunch the wound.
(*Malcolm is borne off.*)
There lurks a mystery beneath his words
I would have clear'd——too well the Baron knew
His cause of woe;——they cannot point at him.

SOLDIER.

My lord, we wait your orders
How to dispose the pris'ners.

OSBERT.

Conduct them to the castle, till I send
A force sufficient to possess Glendore.

MORTON—(*advancing.*)

I know, my lord, I justly merit death;
But if repentance can your mercy move,
Oh! spare my life! and I'll unfold a tale
That much concerns the conq'ror of Glendore!

OSBERT.

I cannot listen now—but since you seem
Truly repentant of your mispent life,
Attend my steps, and when my leisure suits
You shall be heard. Lead hence the pris'ners.
*(pris'ners led off.)*
Come hither, soldier—you are one of those
Who sav'd me from destruction---say, how was it
You and your comrades came to my assistance?

SOLDIER.

Edgar, my lord,
To whom you mention'd your intended combat,
Suspecting Malcolm's treach'ry, besought us
To follow him to the place of battle,
Where we were hast'ning when we heard the sound
Of clashing swords;—Edgar, whose eager haste
Outstrip'd his followers, first saw your danger,
And springing forward, turn'd aside the blow
That else had left us to lament your loss.

OSBERT.

The generous injur'd youth!
Now could I curse the pride of ancient rank,
For it alone withholds his just reward.
Shame upon me—Where is your gallant leader?
Let me embrace him.

SOLDIER.

Soon as he saw you safe,
Saying his presence was no longer needed,
He parted hence abruptly.

OSBERT—*(apart.)*

'Twas a severe reproach—I must have wrong'd him!

*A servant enters hastily.*

SERVANT.

Thank Heav'n I have found my lord!

OSBERT.

What's happen'd? wherefore this alarm?

SERVANT.

The lady Matilda——

OSBERT.

What of her?

SERVANT.

As walking unattended near the ramparts,
Four ruffians, mounted on swift footed steeds,
Rush'd from the neighb'ring wood, and having seiz'd her,
Spurr'd their foaming beasts, and fled away.

OSBERT.

Astonishment! haste! fly!
On to the castle with the utmost speed,
And mount the fleetest coursers to pursue them.
[*Exeunt.*

END OF ACT IV.

ACT

## *ACT V.*

### SCENE I.

*An Apartment in the Castle of Glendore,* MALCOLM *discovered lying on a couch.*

MALCOLM.

The mortal gangrene of my fest'ring wound
Spreads to my heart, and gnaws the strings of life.
But double—double tortures rack my mind!
Oh!———Oh!———

*Enter* EMMA.

EMMA.

I shudder at the sight!——
My lord, I come obedient to your orders———
He heeds me not!---How chang'd that haughty brow.
Where are those smiles of insolent contempt
For other's suff'rings? Where that sullen frown
Which spoke the gloomy broodings of the soul?
All---all are fled---and agony alone
Sits on his clammy forehead———

MALCOLM.

Inexorable fiends!
Tug not so hard———ye soon shall have your fill,
And riot in revenge.

EMMA.

EMMA.

When I behold him thus
Resentment dies, and I forget my wrongs.
My Lord——

MALCOLM—(*seeing her.*)

Ha!——Art thou here?——that's kind—too kind,
Come hither!---Nay fear not---I will not harm thee.
Oh!——Emma——Oh!------

EMMA.

You seem in pain---can I assist you?

MALCOLM.

No!--Ah, No!

EMMA.

I'm sorry for it.

MALCOLM.

You should not.

EMMA.

Why?——

MALCOLM.

'Twould be a crime in you to pity me!
I bade thee hither to relate a tale——
Oh God! 'twill shake thy gentle nature so,
Thou shalt awhile forget thy sex's softness,
Rush on my guilty breast, and stain thy hands
With the polluted current of my heart.

EMMA.

Your words surprize and shock me.

MALCOLM.

I must be quick---e'en now convulsive spasms
Proclaim approaching death.

EMMA.

What will become of me,
The last of all my race?

MALCOLM.

Not so I hope---unless in this sad instance
Fate should have prov'd less merciful than I.

EMMA.

Unfold thy dark mysterious meaning.

MALCOLM.

Your mother lost her life
In giving you a brother—who surviv'd,
Although reported to have shar'd her fate;
But, as an obstacle to my ambition,
I had him secretly remov'd.

EMMA.

Then I had now enjoy'd a brother's kindness
But for thy cruelty! merciful God!
That such barbarity should wear man's form.

MALCOLM.

Thank providence his death
Stains not a page in the black catalogue
Of Malcolm's crimes---he was conducted hence
As the unlawful offspring of a wretch
Whose subtile villainy attach'd me to him---
Enquire the rest of Morton.

EMMA.

Thus let me bend,
And crave forgiveness for th' unjust suspicion.
O, if my brother lives! when we embrace
Our orphan tears shall join their kindred fonts,
And weep a flood of gratitude to thee.

MALCOLM.

MALCOLM.

What dost thou talk of?
Did I not——Oh——God!

EMMA.

All---all's forgotten---you spar'd my brother!
I forgive you all!

MALCOLM.

You know not whom you pardon---you had, oh!—
But he's no more.

EMMA.

Speak, I conjure you---who is no more?

MALCOLM.

Thy father! Oh, thy father!

EMMA.

Alas!
Death, kindly snatch'd him from this world of woe,
To rest in peace beside my sainted mother,
Ere reason dawn'd upon my infant mind.

MALCOLM.

So thinks your guileless innocence;
O had he died when you suppose he did,
What pangs had I escap'd; but 'twas not so—
Amidst the horrors of a gloomy dungeon
He linger'd long——Nor has the maiden moon
Thrice dipt her silver bosom in the deep,
Since, worn with misery, he sunk to rest.

EMMA.

Mighty God!
Had I so lately then a living parent!
Whence sprang thy fatal mercy to his daughter?
Who might have comforted his sorrowing heart

And

And shar'd his anguish, had she shar'd his fate.
She, though a pris'ner, breath'd the ambient air
Fresh'd by morning zephyrs; whilst he inhal'd
Thick vapors, poison'd by the stagnant dews,
Which hung in tears around his prison walls,
As though they wept in pity of his woes.

MALCOLM.

Oh! torture! torture!

EMMA.

Dost thou not tremble at the thoughts of death,
When thou must answer for thy earthly crimes
At the tribunal of eternal justice?
Where thou shalt see my father's injur'd spirit
Stalk grimly forth, and with an awful voice
Arraign thee of his murder!
(*The Baron enters, pauses, and looks at* MALCOLM *with great emotion.*)

MALCOLM—(*seeing him approach.*)

'Tis here! 'tis here!
See---see---it smiles forgiveness———
(*The Baron advances*---MALCOLM *starts from the couch and falls.*)

EMMA.

I can no longer view this scene of horror! (*Retires.*)

BARON.

Revive! awake! I come to seal thy pardon.

MALCOLM.

It bids me wake!---oh! let me die deceiv'd!

BARON.

Behold, I live to close thine eyes in comfort.

MALCOLM.

MALCOLM.

Oh God---I thank thee!---(*He looks earnestly at the Baron for some time, and seems endeavoring to speak, then groans, and dies.*)

BARON.

His look declar'd me known.
May all thy guilt be expiated here
And thy soul rest in peace! Ill fated brother.

EMMA.

Brother!——be still, my heart——
Whence these tumultuous throbs?

BARON.

What voice is that so musically sad?
Stay---let me gaze---I cannot be deceiv'd,---
Image of her who fill'd these eager arms,
Come to thy father's heart! (*He runs to Emma, who endeavors to meet him, but overcome by her feelings she faints in his arms---the scene closes.*)

## SCENE II.

*Morven Castle. Enter the* COUNTESS *and Servants.*

COUNTESS—(*in great distress.*)

Why this delay?
They will escape, and I shall lose my daughter.

SERVANT.

Madam, the earl with twenty chosen men
E'en now pursue them wihan eagle's swiftness.

COUNTESS.

COUNTESS.

And shall I not pursue them?
What shall prevent me?---nothing---Wretch, begone,
Prepare the steeds---I am resolv'd---away.

SERVANT.

Alas! my lady,
The gath'ring clouds foretell a dreadful storm;
Already thunder-claps are heard afar,
And forked lighnings quiver in the north.

COUNTESS.

Have not accursed villains stol'n my daughter?
What can I suffer worse---let the storm rage,
Let the dread light'nings shatter these proud tow'rs
To shapeless ruins, and I will not murmur,
If Heav'n will guide me to my darling child.
Follow this instant, I will delay no longer.

[*Exeunt.*

## SCENE III.

*The inside of a ruined Abbey, with the remains of an Altar*---MATILDA *sitting on the ground near it, her appearance wild and disordered. At some distance several men refreshing themselves round a fire on the ground.---A violent storm, with thunder and lightning.*

1st RUFFIAN.

The storm somewhat abates,
We must proceed, or else intruding dawn
May lead to our detection.

2d RUFFIAN.

2d RUFFIAN.

'Tis yet too soon ;
Our jaded animals require rest :
Eight leagues of steep, untravel'd mountain road
Divide us from the port.

MATILDA.

Ha, ye barb'rous men,
If e'er compassion touch'd your flinty hearts
Pity my fate ; say, whither must I go?

1st RUFFIAN.

Have comfort, lady ;
You go from Caledonia's barren shores
To where perpetual summer clothes the fields
In never fading verdure ;---where no cares,
Save those which love creates, shall e'er disturb you.

MATILDA.

Perfidious wretch, to preach such horrid comfort.

1st RUFFIAN.

Come, lets on. *(Offers to raise her.)*

MATILDA.

Prophane me not by thy polluted touch. *(Rises.)*
Here will I cling---and should your impious hands
Attempt to drag me from this hallow'd spot,
Where once an altar rear'd its sacred head,
My shrieks shall move the warring elements
*(Distant thunder.)*
To my protection, and the loud thunder
Which now rolls threat'ning o'er thy guilty head
Shall strike thee to the earth. *(Violent peal of thunder.)*

1st RUFFIAN—*(after a pause.)*

Thou art a prize I would dispute with Heav'n.
Help me to bear her hence ; *(They attempt to force her off-she shrieks--*EDGAR *enters with his sword drawn.*

EDGAR.

EDGAR.

I heard the cries of terror---
Ha! a female struggling! Cowards, not men!

MATILDA.

O save me, save me, *(Bursting from him and running to* EDGAR.)

EDGAR.

God of my hopes! it is Matilda's voice.
O my lov'd lady!

MATILDA.

Edgar!---Preserv'd by thee!

2d RUFFIAN.

Release her.

EDGAR.

Not while my arm is able to protect her.

2d RUFFIAN.

Then you must pay your insolence with life.

OSBERT, MORTON, *and servants, rush in.*

OSBERT.

'Tis she! Edgar! Inexplicable conduct!
Thou double traitor, defend thyself.

EDGAR.

Against Lord Morven! never.

MATILDA.

O my brother! for Heaven's sake be calm.

OSBERT.

Dost hear me, coward?

EDGAR.

Coward I'm none; beware lest I forget—

OSBERT.

Forget what? that thou'rt a villain!
I now remind thee thou'rt a cursed one.

EDGAR.

I can no longer---rash, ungenerous man,
Why urge me thus?---I but defend my life,
Thine be the fault whoever falls.---*(they fight.)*

MATILDA.

First pierce thy sister's breast!---*(throws herself between them, Edgar drops his sword, and catches her in his arms.)*

OSBERT—*(haughtily snatching her from him.)*

Stand off! or perish!

MATILDA.

Hear me, Osbert, or I perish too!

1st RUFFIAN—*(rushing suddenly forward.)*

Here point your sword—strike not the innocent;

OSBERT.

What dost thou mean?

1st RUFFIAN.

That thou'rt deceiv'd
In him thy hasty sword had nearly stab'd,
A living monument of all that's virtuous,
The envy once, but now the admiration
Of guilty Zulmio!—*(Throws off his disguise.)*

OSBERT.

Count Zulmio!---Oh, my injured friend!
Can'st thou forgive me!---I dare not hope it.
*(To Edgar.)*

EDGAR.

Yes, from my soul! my heart is Osbert's still,
By friendship's dearest ties.

OSBERT.

OSBERT—(*to the Count.*)

Now, Sir! remember what is due
To your unequalled villainy---your sword
Must answer---draw!

COUNT.

Never, never!---"Would'st thou risk thy life
"With one so lost to every sense of honor?"
I will not add thy murder to my crimes.
"Here sheath thy weapon in my guilty breast,
"And rid me of a life I now contemn."
If, in extenuation of my guilt,
Aught may be pleaded, lo! yon weeping beauty!
"My fame was once unblemished as thy own,
"But love, who conquers all, o'erpower'd me.
"The fair Matilda had dispos'd her heart
"To one more worthy, and my jealous nature
"Could not abide the preference; therefore
"I took this fatal step to gain my wishes.

OSBERT.

Stain'd as thou art, I can't withhold my pity;
Live!--and if thou can'st---live happy.

COUNT.

Yet add another boon to thy exalted mercy.

OSBERT.

What's that?

COUNT.

Forgiveness!

OSBERT.

Take it---no more!

COUNT.

Your kindness wounds more keenly than reproach;
Hence let me fly, and seek a distant grave,

To shield me from dishonour and remorse.---(*Going.*)

COUNT—(*returning.*)

" Yet I must stay, and bear your presence longer,
" To tell how much I have wrong'd you, Edgar!

EDGAR.

" You never injur'd me
" But in the person of my friend.

COUNT.

" You know it not, but mark me!
" Love, that pernicious pois'ner of my fame,
" Had gain'd such influence o'er my yielding mind,
" It rooted from my breast each nobler passion;
" And jealousy discovering you had gain'd
" A tender int'rest in Matilda's heart,
" I strove to be reveng'd, and basely sought,
" By false insinuations, to destroy
" Your friendship with her brother---soon after
" Surprising you together in the grove
" Gave color to the falsehoods I had uttered.
" But now, o'erwhelm'd with sorrow and remorse,
" I quit you of the shameful imputations,
" Declare your innocence, and fly reproach. [*Exit.*

EDGAR.

" Unhappy man! I pardon all your wrongs
" Since you've restor'd me to my friend's esteem."
(*To* OSBERT) When you suspected most my treachery
(And I must own appearances seem'd strong
Against me), I had just sacrificed my peace
For ever, to deserve your friendship.

OSBERT.

O spare me, Edgar!
Call not to mind my late ungen'rous conduct;
There is but one atonement I can make---
My pride's subdued by thy superior worth!
If she consents, Matilda shall be thine! --

EDGAR.

My Lord !---(*With surprise and emotion.*)

OSBERT.

What says my sister?

MATILDA.

I'm not insensible to Edgar's worth,
And, if his happiness depends on me,
My heart and hand are his.

EDGAR.

Soul of all goodness ! let me seal my bliss.
(*Kisses her hand.*)
O my lord ! I cannot speak my gratitude---
When seeking shelter from the raging storm
Among these ruins, flying I knew not whither,
Grief was the sole companion of my way ;
Now I depart with friendship, love, and joy.

OSBERT.

" You have deserv'd it all.- -(*thunders.*)
" Roll on ye thunders ! for to ye we owe
" This happy meeting.---Long we search'd in vain,
" Doubling the deep recesses of the forest,
" And now, heart-broken, were returning home,
" When the broad lustre of the storm disclos'd
" These sacred ruins of monastic greatness.

(*Enter the* COUNTESS, *precipitately, the* BARON, EMMA, *and Attendants---The* COUNTESS *and* MATILDA *rush into each other's arms.*)

COUNTESS.

Do I again embrace thee ? Oh, Matilda !

MATILDA.

And hast thou brav'd the terrors of the storm
To seek thy daughter ?

COUNTESS.

COUNTESS.

The madd'ning storm, loud as it howl'd,
Inspir'd no terrors but for thee, my child!
Hour after hour I pass'd in speechless anguish;
At length, unable to endure suspense,
I left the castle, and these gen'rous friends
Would not but join me in the drear pursuit.

MATILDA.

Thou best of mothers!

OSBERT.

But, my noble friend,
How did you trace our steps amidst this forest?
*(To the Baron.)*

BARON.

'Twas fortune led us, 'till hard by we met
The caitif Zulmio, who reveal'd his guilt,
And, deeply penitent, besought forgiveness.

COUNTESS—*(to Edgar.)*

How shall I compensate the man who sav'd
My son from death, my daughter from destruction?

EDGAR.

O, Madam,
If you will add your sanction to the boon
Your son's unequall'd bounty has bestow'd,
My bliss will be supreme.

COUNTESS.

Take it unconfin'd.

OSBERT.

Assur'd of your concurrence,
I have conferr'd what could alone be deemed
His worth's equivalent—Matilda's hand!—

COUNTESS.

Who could so well deserve her?

EDGAR.

Thus let me kneel!—*(kneels.)*

COUNTESS.

Rise, Edgar! you are now my son;
Henceforth you equally shall share my love
With Osbert and Matilda! thus divided
It shall grow afresh, lest in partition
They lose an atom of my present fondness.
So when we part the lily's cluster'd root,
Each sever'd bulb puts forth a blooming flow'r
Fair as it's mother plant.

MORTON—*(advancing and throwing himself at the Baron's feet.)*

O, my much injured lord!
Low at your feet behold a suppliant wretch,
Who but obeyed your tyrant brother's will.

BARON.

Ha! wretch! Art thou here?—Rise!
And, as thou hop'st for mercy at my hands,
Answer my questions unreserv'd—"By Heav'n!
"Should'st thou be found to deviate from truth,
"Such punishment as thy enormous crimes
"Have long deserv'd, shall be inflicted with
"The utmost rigor.

MORTON.

Then hear, O Heav'n! if I should utter falsehood
May thy recording spirit write it down
In characters indelible--and thou,
When I am summou'd to appear before thee,
Turn, unforgiving, from the blacken'd page.

BARON.

I tremble to enquire, lest ev'ry hope
Should wither at his answer—Morton, know

I am

I am not unacquainted with your conduct
Towards my child!---Now, as you value life,
" Declare where he is conceal'd--or have you slain
" My son?

OSBERT.

" Hast thou a son?

BARON.

" He only knows ---Dost thou not hear me, wretch?
" This silence proves thy guilt!---Where is my son?

MORTON.

" Alas! I know not.

BARON.

" Thou dost, thou vile dissembler!
" Declare the worst, or I'll tear forth thy heart,
" And search the secret there.

MORTON.

" I've sworn
" To speak the truth, nor will I utter less.---
" When glory call'd you from domestic joys,
" To check the inroads of a daring foe,
" I was detected by your guilty brother
" In base contrivance to defraud your service:
" He threatened me with death, unless I swore
" Thenceforth to own no other lord than him.
" To save me from destruction I comply'd:
" He then unfolded his ambitious views
" To seize your castle.---Your noble lady
" Had just expired———

BARON.

" Oh! dwell not there!
Declare to whom you gave my new-born child,
I've learnt the rest.

MORTON.

MORTON.

In a lone cot, remote from public view,
A soldier dwelt, an honest, gallant soul,
Whose wounds withheld him from th' embattled field.
I feign'd a tale, that having been acquainted
With a fair lady of reputed fame,
She bore a child---deluded thus to screen,
As he imagin'd, a dishonor'd maid
From the world's scornful taunts, he took
His liege lord's son, and in concealment rear'd
The noble babe---for having lately lost
His infant boy, he pass'd him for his own.
When fifteen summers had matur'd his mind,
The good old man would oft enraptur'd boast
The growing virtues of his foster son.
Now hear my guilt !———

BARON.

Obdurate wretch !
Did thy humanity so shortly triumph;
" That whom thou spar'd'st an infant, in his youth,
" When life display'd her most alluring charms,
" And the young heart expanded to delight,
" Thou cut'st untimely off !

MATILDA.

Could man be so inhuman ?

MORTON.

Tho' great my guilt, I am no murderer.
I long withheld the tributary gold
Your brother ordered for the child's support;
" The good old man, with strong remonstrance, oft
" Accus'd me of ingratitude, but knowing
" He lov'd the youth too fondly to renounce
" His guardian care, I heeded not his words ;
Enrag'd at my injustice, in disgust

The

The vet'ran left his cot, and with him took
Whom he suppos'd my son.

BARON.

O God, I tremble still!---Where did he fly?

MORTON.

I never learnt.

BARON.

Then, tho' he lives, he still must live unknown
To his despairing father.

OSBERT.

Hast thou then heard no tidings of the youth
Since his departure?

MORTON.

Yes, at the time you were Lord Malcolm's prisoner,
A dateless billet from his guardian came,
Informing me that my reputed child
Was 'mongst your captive followers.

BARON.

O fatal notice!
Then did my brother's jealousy destroy---
But no! his dying words disown'd it.

MORTON.

Thus counsel'd I enquir'd among the captives
Which was Fitzallan's son.

EDGAR—(*eagerly.*)

Fitzallan's son!—O Heav'n and earth! proceed—
But many bear that name.---(*checking his ardor.*)

BARON.

Quick! on your life!

MORTON.

I gain'd intelligence, and sought his cell,

But, to my great surprise, the door was open,
And the pris'ner fled.

EDGAR—(*with great emotion.*)

Hast thou the soldier's billet?

MORTON.

Hear its contents.---*(takes out a paper.)*
" Altho' full well I know thy callous heart,
" Yet I cannot suppose thy baseness such
" As to destroy thy son, therefore I send
" This intimation---thy child is number'd
" With those who bravely share Lord Morven's fate.
" He knows no other than that he's my son,
" For I could ne'er endure to wound his ear
" With the vile tale of his disgraceful birth,
" Therefore as such enquire him.
" EDGAR FITZALLAN.

EDGAR—(*snatches the paper.*)

It is his hand !——
Here pour thy blessing, O my honor'd sire !
I am thy son.---*(falls at the Baron's feet.)*

BARON—(*raises and embraces Edgar.)*

My heart's adopted ! art thou then my son?
" Can mortal taste such happiness below?
" Or am I in the regions of the blest?
Fountain of mercy, from whose bounteous source
These joys arise, teach my exulting heart
How to support, with constancy unshaken,
These wonderful extremes. And thou, O nature !
Whose secret sympathy impress'd my bosom
With tenderness paternal, e're I knew
It was a son inspir'd it, let these tears
Express that gratitude I cannot speak.

COUNTESS.

COUNTESS.

My ever honor'd, ever valued friend,
Believe our joy at seeing thee so blest
Is scarce inferior to thy own.

BARON.

I know your goodness.
Morton, you have your freedom,
Retire, and strive by future acts of virtue
To make atonement for your past offences.

[*Exit Morton.*

EDGAR—*(to Osbert.)*

" Now, my lord, I claim your promise,
" You'll not refuse the son of Baron Malcolm
" The prize you gave to Edgar?

OSBERT.

" She's your's but recollect
" Your virtue's gain'd her, not your noble birth.

EDGAR.

" Then lo!
" How fair a daughter I present my father.

BARON.

" May ev'ry blessing which disposing Heav'n
" Show'rs on the union of two virtuous hearts,
" Light on my children! may their offspring prove
" Fair as their mother---as their father brave.

OSBERT.

" While fortune with a lavish hand
" Largely distributes happiness, I claim
" My promis'd portion.---This sweet maid consents
" To bless my ardent hopes.

BARON.

" You have my warmest sanction.

MATILDA.

" Then let me clasp a sister!
" To whom could Osbert dedicate so well
" The life which you preserv'd.---Our sorrows past
" Shall be remember'd only to inhance
" Our present happiness.--Heav'n may afflict,
" But never will desert the truly good.

COUNTESS.

Again, my friend, our hospitable gates
Shall ope alternate to each other's lord.

EDGAR.

Yes; this auspicious day unites for-ever
The future int'rests of Glendore and Morven;
Their Feuds no more shall call their warriors forth;
No more shall discord rear her gorgon head..
Henceforth their kindred bands alone shall draw
Their conq'ring swords against the common foe.
Our gates shall open and the feast begin;
Our echoing halls shall ring with peals of rapture,
And ev'ry one partake the gen'ral joy.

FINIS.

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# PROLOGUE,

*By the Author.*

The bard, long skill'd in all the drama's wiles,
Who oft has courted, and obtain'd your smiles,
Not without fear renews his doubtful claim,
To deck with added sprigs his wreath of Fame.
Oh! judge his feelings then, whose earliest bays
First court the genial sunshine of your praise.
Ah! think, tho' Justice may sometimes decree,
To lop the honors of the tow'ring tree,
Its sturdy stem and fibres still remain,
Put forth fresh buds and vegetate again;
But, when the sapling feels the fatal blow,
Rootless it falls—no second branches grow.—
Permit our seedling then to flourish here,
Where flow'rs and plants of various kinds appear.
Say, can the florist's ever-anxious care
Cull choicer beauties from his gay parterre,
Than this fair garden of the muse's shows,
Than here their brightest, loveliest charms disclose?
Its gaudiest hues, here *London Pride* displays,
Here *Coxcombs* nod and *Painted Ladies* blaze.
Sure *Venus's Looking-glass* here claims a place,
Where *Venus shines reflected* in each face
And ev'ry beauteous cheek such charms discloses,
Methinks *this* is—The *envied Bed of Roses.*
*Laurels* alone are scarce—their glorious boughs,
Stolen by Fame, now deck our warrior's brows.
Oh! had the Goddess in her pilf'ring fit
Stolen the critic's *Ivy* from the Pit,
Secure the Muse might rear her *Virgin bow'r,*
Secure the Bard obtain—a *Golden Show'r.*

# EPILOGUE,

*Written by the Author of the Tragedy, and spoken by Miss SMITH, in the character of Edgar.*

Well, here I am—now, Mr. Prompter, pray
Be kind enough to tell me what to say?
——My stars! what's that I hear—the silly dog!
Not brains enough to write an Epilogue!
Critics, 'tis even so—he is unable,
And therefore bids me speak instead—a Fable—
Two sisters born so very like each other,
As scarce to be distinguish'd by their mother,
Grew up together—vow'd they'd never part—
In short there seem'd between them but one heart;
But, ah! the sequel of my tale will prove
How frail, how fragile, are such vows of love.
*Fashion* and *Novelty* the nymphs were nam'd,
Alike for beauty and attractions fam'd—
One lives with you—ye dashing beaux and belles,
But *Lord knows where her shame-fac'd sister dwells,*
Thinking she might contribute to amuse,
This night I sought her—witness *kilt and Trews.*
I found her too—yes, found her in the *Poet*—
Iv'e *heard* your love of *Novelty*—now *show* it—
*(clapping her hands)*
But to resume my story—Ma'am'selle *Fashion,*
Some little time ago, in furious passion,
Rav'd at her sister, and profanely swore
She'd be with her on friendly terms no more.
Poor *Novelty*, affrighted at her spleen,
Silent withdrew, and now is *seldom seen*;
While Fashion, lest she should return again,
Guards ev'ry entrance with a hideous train
Of *Sphynxes, Crocodiles,* and ev'ry kind
Of ancient monster her revenge can find;
And we, such is the influence of her pique,
Are only *modern*—when we seem *antique.*
Methinks 'twould be an act of great compassion
To reconcile poor *Novelty* to *Fashion.*
Attempt it, critics—I will tell you how—
Applaud that *Novelty* you've witness'd now.
Let your applauses be both loud and ample,
*Fashion* will yield and *follow your* example.

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Manners, George Edgar

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